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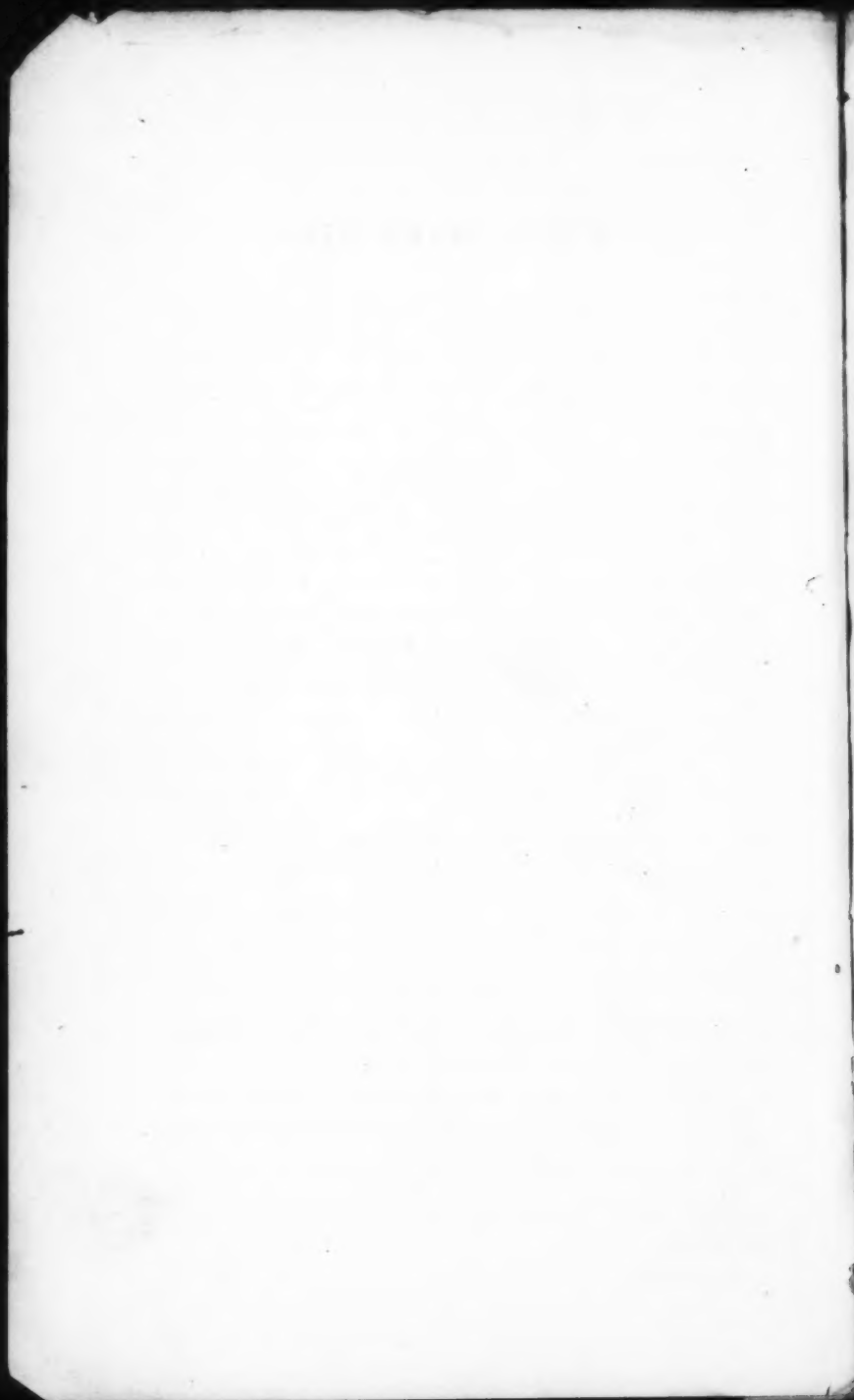
CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| A FEW WORDS FOR MARY STUART. By Henry James Coleridge, D.D. | 1 |
| EXHUMO: A POEM. By Barry Cornwall | 15 |
| CONSTANCE SHERWOOD: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. By Lady Georgiana Fullerton. Chapter I. . | 16 |
| RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD CITY. By Julia Kavanagh. . | 25 |
| THE FRENCH EXHIBITION OF 1864 | 36 |
| HALF OUT OF THE WORLD | 51 |
| VIOLET'S FREAK | 65 |
| CHAP. I. "O SUMMER NIGHT!" | |
| " II. AUNT DOROTHY'S PERPLEXITY. | |
| " III. MRS. SARAH SINGLEHEART'S ADVICE. | |

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A Few Words for Mary Stuart.

I WELL remember, about a quarter of a century ago, the flutter that was caused in the Assize Court at Lancaster, during the trial of the great Hornby-Castle will-case—then being tried for the third and last time—when the leading counsel for the heir-at-law, afterwards Sir Cresswell Cresswell, raising his voice just a little more than was absolutely necessary, as some ordinary and unimportant witness left the box, bade the crier call William Wordsworth. William Wordsworth! What on earth could the venerable author of the *Excursion* have to do with old Mr. Marsden's will, on the validity of which the whole issue depended? There, however, the witness stood, not a chance namesake of the poet, but the man himself: the mere sight of him, I remember, no slight treat to two Eton boys there, who perhaps—at least one of them—had read but very few lines of his poetry, but who had been brought up to consider him as the foremost among living English writers. Mr. Wordsworth took the oath, and his examination began. The leader on the opposite side—afterwards and still on the Bench as Chief Baron of the Exchequer—watched Mr. Cresswell narrowly as he made his witness say that for many years he had devoted much attention to English literature and the English language. Now, what could English literature have to do with the cause before the court? The suspense of the audience did not last long; for the great poet was next led to state that he had read over with care a certain number of letters sent, and supposed to have been composed, by the testator, whose capacity to make a will was questioned by his heir-at-law. What Mr. Wordsworth thought of the letters, the expectant public never heard from his own lips. The next question brought up Sir Frederick Pollock with an objection to the kind of evidence that was thus being tendered, and the illustrious witness from Rydal Mount was left to listen to a battle between the two counsel as to its admissibility. After some time thus spent, it was, I think, intimated to Mr. Cresswell by the presiding judge, that although the evidence might be allowed, it was for him to consider whether its production might not afford an awkward handle to the other side in moving for a new trial, in case the heir-at-law should succeed in obtaining a verdict. The case had already been tried twice before; and this time it was thought likely to go in favour of Mr. Cresswell's client. Prudence, therefore, prevailed, and the evidence was waived.

It soon came to be pretty well known, however, what Mr. Wordsworth had come there to say. A part of the evidence in favour of Mr. Marsden's perfect mental capacity consisted of the letters in question. The answer on the side of the heir-at-law was, that they had been written for him by the persons under whose influence he lived. To prove this, Mr. Wordsworth and two other literary men of great reputation—I believe they were Southey and Professor Wilson—had been asked to examine them. They were said to have come to the conclusion, from internal evidence alone, that all the letters could not have been the production of one and the same mind. It was even rumoured that, without any communication with the other two, each of the three had classed the letters in three divisions, and allotted each division to a separate author, and that there was the most striking agreement between them in this distribution. Such was the evidence which it was not thought safe to submit to an intelligent jury, when great tangible interests depended on their verdict. Mr. Cresswell won his cause notwithstanding, and all efforts made to upset the decision failed. Hornby Castle returned to the heir-at-law; and perhaps it might not be in the hands of its present owner, if that evidence had been too rashly pressed.

Now, it may be quite right to be very cautious in allowing the minds of those not always highly cultivated men who compose even "special juries" in this country to be influenced by arguments from internal evidence as to documents, and especially by the authority of great literary names with regard to the value of such arguments. There is a wholesome jealousy of the evidence of "experts" in all such matters. Still, no one can doubt that in historical and literary questions, such considerations ought to have the greatest weight. It is, after all, simply calling in a *connoisseur*. The evidence of such an authority, or the agreement of more than one such authority, would be allowed in a court of law on a question that turned on the genuineness or the value of a picture attributed to a great master. The evidence that convinced Wordsworth, Southey, and Wilson that a set of letters were composed by three different persons, and not by one, may have been delicate and subtle, but it must be allowed to have been cogent enough to warrant a very probable conclusion. Evidence of the same kind, positive as well as negative, is used by the critics of our time, sometimes very rashly, but sometimes very legitimately, to prove or disprove the authenticity of writings both sacred and profane. It has its dangers, but it has its great value: it is like the evidence drawn from the ever-increasing set of facts on which geological theories are built—capable of the greatest abuse, and yet, when rightly balanced, the certain foundation of unquestion-

able conclusions. It is naturally a favourite weapon with a cultivated and inquiring century like the present: we have consequently many brilliant specimens of its successful employment, and many conspicuous instances of its rash and thoughtless abuse; and it would be a great boon to the reasoners and writers of our time if some philosophical logician would lay down for them "the laws and limits of the use of internal evidence." It is only to my present purpose to notice one or two of these laws which have been set at naught by the writers on whom I am going to comment. One is this—that in internal evidence, negative conclusions are much safer than positive: it is easier to be certain that a document is not genuine, from the presence in it of something that ought not to be there, than to be certain that it is genuine, from the presence of several marks that ought to be found in it. Thus, the poems of 'Rowley' had many features that agreed with the age to which they were attributed; but a single word of three letters that was not used in the English of that time was enough to counterbalance all such evidence. Again, internal evidence must be weighed as a whole, and only in subordination to external testimony, where it exists. It is simply illogical and sentimental to fall so much in love with one little bit of internal evidence which we are proud of having discovered ourselves, as to let it supersede all further inquiry, overwhelm all difficulties, and perhaps to make us throw out contemptuous epithets at those who may not value it quite so highly as we do.

I am led to make these remarks by the use made of this kind of evidence in a celebrated passage in Mr. Froude's History of Queen Elizabeth. Mr. Froude has used it in the way of which I complain; and, as was not unnatural, Mr. Kingsley has caught up the hint of his master with enthusiasm, and broken out into strong language against all those who may not think it the finest hit in the world. The subject on which they have done this is the much-debated and, as it would seem, ever-debateable question about the so-called letters of Mary Stuart to the Earl of Bothwell. I call it an ever-debateable question, because, though I believe Mary innocent and the alleged letters forgeries, I am not ignorant that, with our present information on the subject, and considering that the letters themselves have perished, it may never be possible to produce an absolute demonstration of what I think to be the truth. We may, perhaps, come very near to this by a legitimate and skilful use of this very weapon of internal evidence of which I am speaking. There is a far ampler scope opened to investigations of this kind since the publication of the collection of Mary's undisputed letters by Prince Labanoff. The Casket Letters compared with these, compared with the Sonnets said to be found

with them, and with known historical facts, would present an amount of evidence that could hardly be disputed. Whitaker has performed the last part of this task with great skill; but he had not the opportunity of comparing the letters with real productions of Mary's pen. Were this part of the internal evidence worked up, the vindication of Mary would be complete: in fact, it is nearly so already. It is all very well to ignore the whole criticism of a subject, and go on writing as if it did not exist. Such a course requires neither industry nor genius; but let Mr. Froude consider the evidence as it has been collected by M. Wiesener in his *Marie Stuart et le Comte de Bothwell*, and he will see that he has himself over and over again repeated, as facts of history, things as fabulous as the story of Pope Joan, or the existence of the phoenix.

This is not the place for a detailed examination of Mr. Froude's treatment of Queen Mary. No one can read that part of his work without admiring the dramatic power and exquisite art with which the picture has been painted. Still, the question will rise to the lips, Is this history, or is it the highest flight of the sensational style of writing with which we are being made familiar? The object of the historian is truth, not effect: if, when his materials fail or speak ambiguously, he fills up the picture, however ingeniously, and casts aside provoking uncertainties, in order not to mar the dramatic harmony and completeness of his work, he becomes a romancer, not a historian. Again, no one who reads Mr. Froude's volumes can fail to see that if he has no passionate enthusiasms, at least he has certain very passionate aversions. He is far too prejudiced to be a fair historian; and though he is too honest to disguise his deliberate judgment, his hostility to certain characters and certain causes influences his narrative quite as much as if he had set out with the determination to write a one-sided history. To pass from generals to particulars, the character of Mary Stuart has come in for the full measure of Mr. Froude's hostile treatment. He has bestowed great pains on the picture he has drawn of the Scottish Queen; but there is all through a relentless purpose to be detected—a dislike far too deep to spend itself, as it might with Mr. Kingsley, for instance, in abusive declamation—the hatred that plays with and caresses its victim, only to have the occasion of dealing it a more secure and malicious death-blow. Mr. Froude has described her in words which, without any great change, might be applied to his own narrative regarding her. "Behind that grace of form and charm of manner there lay a nature like a panther's—merciless and beautiful!" His description reads beautifully, indeed; but he is as merciless to Mary Stuart as a panther to its prey.

Every one knows the two great stains with which it has been attempted to blacken the memory of Queen Mary. Had she any knowledge of, or share in, the dark plot by which her husband Darnley was murdered? and were her relations with Bothwell criminal before that time, her marriage with him voluntary, or was it simply forced upon her as an inevitable necessity, the only step that could in any way repair her honour after her detention at Dunbar, and the violence there used to her? Was her seizure by him an arranged plot, to which she was privy and consenting, or was she carried off at Foulbriggs against her own will? The answer to be given to both these questions depends, as is well known, on the view that we take as to the authenticity of the celebrated Casket Letters and Sonnets. The advocates of Mary cannot argue in the teeth of the evidence these contained, if it be admitted as authoritative. On the other hand, the charges against her are mainly based upon these documents; partly, also, on an alleged confession of a servant of Bothwell's, called Hubert, or "French Paris." This "confession" is, I need hardly say, equally questioned by those who maintain the innocence of the Queen. Mr. Froude's narrative has not yet come down to the time of the last of the two transactions of which we have spoken; but in a chapter of the very greatest force and beauty of writing he has spoken of the murder of Darnley. All that we can say against this chapter is summed up in very few words: it is a pity that it should appear in a book which professes to be a history, and not a romance. Even then, it would be unfair to take so well-known an historical character as Mary, and paint her so cruelly; but then a great part of the injury done to her would be chargeable to the readers, who might take as a historical representation what professed, in great measure at least, to be the work of the imagination of the writer.

A note at the foot of one of Mr. Froude's pages gives us his reasons for founding his history on these disputed documents. They are "documents," he tells us, "which, without turning history into a mere creation of imaginative sympathies, I do not feel at liberty to doubt. They come to us, after having passed the keenest scrutiny both in England and Scotland. The handwriting was found to resemble so exactly that of the Queen, that the most accomplished expert could detect no difference. One of the letters could have been invented only by a genius equal to that of Shakespeare; and that one, once accomplished, would have been so overpoweringly sufficient for its purpose, that no forger would have multiplied the chances of detection by adding the rest. The inquiry at the time seems to me to supersede authoritatively all later conjectures. The English Council, among whom were many friends of Mary Stuart, had the French

originals before them, while we have only translations, or translations of translations" (viii. p. 352).

Now, it will be convenient to divide the proofs thus hinted at by Mr. Froude into the two very obvious classes of internal and external. The external arguments that weigh with him seem to consist of the examination to which the documents were subjected in England and Scotland, the chief point established being the similarity of the handwriting to that of the Queen. The internal argument may be reduced to two heads. One of the letters—the first—could not have been forged by any but a genius equal to Shakespeare, and then it is highly improbable that any forger would go on beyond that one and all-sufficient invention. As I have been speaking already of internal evidence, and it is to the use of that kind of argument by Mr. Froude that I wish to draw attention, I will take that first.

The second of Mr. Froude's remarks may be dismissed in a few words. The letter of which he speaks is *not* sufficient for the purposes of the enemies of Mary, supposing them to have been the forgers. He publishes his history as he writes it, and therefore does not look far forward. He does not remember, then, that a part of the case against Mary is the attempt to prove her guilty of complicity, not only in the murder of her husband, but in her own abduction by Bothwell to Dunbar. This charge was, it is true, not made at first. In fact, it is worth while to recal one or two dates with regard to this matter. The casket of letters—or, as it was *afterwards* said, letters, sonnets, and marriage-contracts—came into the possession of the Confederate Lords on June 20, 1567. The examination of Bothwell's servant, with whom it is said that they were found, took place on the 26th. *On that very day* the Confederate Lords issued the proclamation of the Privy Council against Bothwell, accusing him both of the murder of Darnley, and of the violent abduction of the Queen, which had made it necessary for her to marry him. This form of the charge against him was afterwards repeated by Murray and others; and yet they had all the time in their possession the seventh of the alleged letters, if it is to be received as genuine, which makes it quite clear that Mary was to be carried off by her own consent. This letter, by the by, seems to contradict distinctly the "confession" of Paris—another of Mr. Froude's sources of information—as well as one of the sonnets said to have been found with it. The examination which Mr. Froude supposes the documents to have undergone cannot have been very stringent, if it failed to detect the discrepancy between the sonnet and the letter.

However, the first point made by Mr. Froude, with regard to the internal evidence, is by far the most important. He is speaking, of

course, of the first letter, when he says that it would require a Shakespeare to invent it. He may mean two things, for there are two very remarkable features about this letter: the first is, that it purports to give very accurately and minutely the details of a long conversation between Mary and Darnley, who was then sick of the smallpox, and to whom Mary had gone, according to the version of her enemies, to coax him to come with her from Glasgow either to Craigmillar or to some other place, where the intended murder might be easily effected. And I think it must be allowed freely, that unless we can otherwise account for the details in the letter, it is not at all likely that a forger would invent them. Mr. Froude does not explain whether this is what he means as requiring the invention of a Shakespeare; or whether he alludes to another feature in the letter, showing, as it seems to him, the touch of the hand of genius, if it were forged. This consists of a very striking passage, in which Mary (if she is the writer) begs Bothwell not to think evil of her for her treachery to Darnley. I cannot do Mr. Froude more justice than by transcribing the passage as it stands in his pages:

"Have no evil opinion of me for this," she concluded; "you yourself are the cause of it: for my own private revenge I would not do it to him. Seeing, then, that to obey you, my dear love, I spare neither honour, conscience, hazard, nor greatness, take it, I pray you, in good part. Look not at that woman whose false tears should not be so much regarded as the true and faithful labour which I am bearing to deserve her place; to obtain which, against my nature, I betray those that may hinder me," &c. (Froude, viii. p. 360.)

It is this passage which, if I may say so, has made Mr. Kingsley dance with delight. He considers that it precludes all further argument. "We find words," he says, "such as no man—perhaps not even Shakespeare—could invent or imagine; words which prove their own authenticity by their most fantastic and unexpected, yet most simple and pathetic, adherence to human nature. Those who doubt the terrible fact of Mary having written that letter, *must know as little of the laws of internal evidence as of the tricks of the human heart.*" (Macmillan's Magazine, Jan. p. 223.)

Mr. Kingsley has, very probably, never looked at the letters in the original, or in what is said to be such; and as for *that* law of internal evidence, which requires that the whole of it should be considered together, or for that other, which gives far greater weight to negative proofs of this kind—such as the many contradictions that have been pointed out between these letters and received facts of history, dates, and the like—than to positive indications of a certain authorship, he has probably never given them a thought with regard to

the case of Mary Stuart. He is content with the single Shakespearian touch which Mr. Froude has pointed out. Now, here comes in the mischief of such reasoning; it is as bad, as such, as the simple sentiment of sympathy for romantic misfortune, which, as these writers would tell us, makes young ladies and others like them jump, in the face of all evidence, to the conclusion that Mary could not be guilty. There are other things that play tricks besides the human heart, Mr. Kingsley: and one of these—as perhaps you yourself know—is the hand of a writer with old documents before him, out of which he has a temptation to *compose* what is striking, as a dramatist or a novelist might do. As Mr. Froude has not gone into ecstasies over the passage in question himself, he may perhaps not attach so much importance to it as his admirer, and therefore may be excused for not having drawn attention to the liberty that he has taken with the text. If Mary wrote the letter, she wrote the *words* quoted by Mr. Froude, but not in the sentences and context in which he has placed them. They are taken from two different parts of the letter; and I cannot help thinking that their effect has been wonderfully enhanced, and their sense changed, by their juxtaposition. This has been done by a genius not quite so great as that of Shakespeare—by the genius of Mr. Froude. He has taken one or two other similar liberties with this same letter: thus, where Mary is made to say, “Be not afraid, the *place* shall hold to the death,” he has written “the *plan* shall hold to the death.” I trust we shall be told some day whether the other quotations with which he has adorned his pages—those from the letters of Quadra to Philip II., for instance—are given us on the same principle. Now, let us take to pieces what Mr. Froude has so cleverly put together, from two distinct passages separated by a considerable interval. In the first of these Mary is made to speak as if she wanted to extract some secret from her husband, which she could only hope to do by confessing something to him, and as to this she asks Bothwell’s leave. It happens to be a celebrated passage in the controversy, as it is one of those from which it is clear, on a comparison of the different versions, that the *Scotch* is the original, not the French. “By all that I can learn, he is in great suspicion, and yet notwithstanding he gives credit to my word, but yet not so far that he will show any thing to me: but nevertheless I shall draw it out of him, if you will that I avow all unto him. But I will never rejoice to deceive any body that trusts in me; yet notwithstanding you may command me in all things. Have no evil opinion of me for that cause, by reason (that) you are the occasion of it yourself; because, for my own private revenge, I would not do it unto him.”

Now, it may be difficult to discover exactly what is meant by the secret which Mary is made to wish to worm out of her husband, at the price of an avowal of something on her own side; but we think it can hardly be said that we have hitherto come to any thing that requires the hand of Shakespeare. That very clever and unscrupulous forger, Buchanan, might have produced this. The sentence which Mr. Froude has tacked on to it comes from another part of the letter, and relates to another subject—to some suspicion, as it would appear, that Bothwell was supposed to entertain of Mary, as not sufficiently trusting his friends. “Be not offended that I give not over-great credit. Now, seeing to obey you, my dear life, I spare neither honour, conscience, hazard, nor greatness whatsoever, take it, I pray you, in good part, and not after the interpretation of your false gude-brother (brother-in-law), to whom, I pray you, give no credit against the most faithful lover that ever ye had, or ever shall have.”

This may well be forged; but I cannot help thinking that the two passages look very different when they are separated, as they ought to have been in Mr. Froude's pages, and that they hardly justify the language used by Mr. Kingsley, as to their unapproachable pathos and faithfulness to human nature. But in any case, even if it required Shakespeare himself, instead of Buchanan, to forge the letter, forged it must be, whatever Mr. Kingsley may say, if it contains undeniable mistakes and contradictions, such as have been pointed out by Whitaker and others. To deny this, is as silly and illogical as the most lackadaisical sentimentality. I pass on to the other internal features which may seem to stamp this letter as genuine.

The letter consists, as I have said, chiefly of a narrative of the long conversation between Mary and Darnley on the evening of her arrival at Glasgow, where he was lying sick. Her object is to get him to trust himself with her. There are mutual recriminations and questionings,—all that might be supposed to pass under such circumstances, after their estrangement and separation. There is even mention, as it is alleged, of things that were secret at the time, known, at least, only to very few besides Mary herself; the meaning of which had to be discovered afterwards. What forger would have exposed himself to the risk of inventing a conversation like this? However, I venture to think that Mary's accusers have defeated themselves; at least, as far as this,—that they have proved for us that it would have been very easy to forge this letter. Mr. Froude tells us that the details of the conversation, as related in the letter, exactly tally with the deposition of Crawford, as it exists in the Rolls' House. Crawford was in the service of Lennox (father of Darnley), and was afterwards entirely in the hands of Murray and

his partisans. His own account of the matter is, that Darnley told him every thing that passed between himself and Mary; and that, in order to give a faithful account to his master Lennox, he wrote down immediately, word for word, what he heard from Darnley. Thus there were, if this story is true, two persons writing down what passed,—Mary for Bothwell, and Crawford for Lennox. Those who think with Mr. Froude are bound to believe Crawford. A paper, then, existed, in the possession of Mary's enemies, giving every detail of her conversation with Darnley; entering into particulars which certainly any ordinary forger would have avoided, the truth of which it would be impossible to deny. What more was required for the forger than to turn this paper into a letter to Bothwell, and interlard it with passages such as those we have quoted, which would serve the purpose of proving the criminal love of the Queen for Bothwell, and her complicity with him in his designs on her husband's life? The translation into French, and imitation of Mary's handwriting, of which we shall speak presently, were minor matters. We all know what mischief may be done by interpolations, even of a word. There is an amusing story told somewhere of the extreme embarrassment caused to one of the advocates of Queen Caroline, by the publication of one of his private notes to a colleague in the newspapers of the other side. He had written of some step they wished the Queen to take: "I am afraid we shall hardly be able to get her up to the scratch!" The malicious editor who published it only added one word,—"*up to the scratch sober!*" With such materials as Crawford's papers to work upon, no one can deny that the production of this celebrated first letter would be comparatively easy; and, in fact, I think that there are in it several minute indications that such was its real history.

The remaining letters said to have been found in the casket do not present any such features as those of which I have been speaking. I think no one will say that there is much internal evidence of their authenticity. On the other hand, they are open to numberless objections, on account of their inconsistency with known dates and facts. Still less can any safe argument be founded upon the sonnets, which, by the by, were not mentioned at all in the *first* accusation founded on the contents of the casket; which seems, like the bag of the good lady in the *Swiss Family Robinson Crusoe*, to have had a wonderful faculty of producing, from time to time, whatever was wanted for the purposes of its possessors. The real force of internal evidence, therefore, is strongly against the genuineness of its contents; but it is not my object now to draw out the argument, to which Whitaker has done full justice, as far as it was possible in his time.

I must, however, say a few words about the external evidence on which Mr. Froude relies; more especially as the objections to it will be found to fall in with what I have already said about the importance of Crawford's papers for the purposes of the forgers. Mr. Froude, then, tells us that the inquiry at the time seems to him to supersede present conjecture; that the letters were submitted to the strictest examination both in Scotland and in England, and that the most practised experts failed to detect any dissimilarity between the writing and that of Queen Mary. Now, I might take this statement simply as it stands, and say that it is far from being enough to satisfy us. The examination to which the letters were subjected did not go further, in any case, than a comparison of handwriting. It did not go into other internal evidence at all; it did not test the statements and dates of the letters by other authorities, such as Murray's journal; it did not compare letter with letter, nor with the sonnets. There might have been many more inconsistencies and absurdities about the forgery, if it was one, than those which Mary's defenders have since found; and yet all would have passed unchallenged. This is not the kind of examination which ought to supersede further discussion. Moreover, we know for certain, not only that Mary's handwriting could be forged, but that in many actual cases it *was* so forged; and there were many in the service of the rebel lords who could imitate it exactly. I find only three occasions on which it is pretended that the originals were produced,—in the Scotch Privy-Council, in the Scotch Parliament, and at Elizabeth's Council-board at Westminster. On the two first occasions I find no mention of a comparison of handwriting at all. On the first, the persons present were all enemies of Mary; on the second, some of her friends were present,—a small minority, in a parliament where every thing was conducted with great violence. They had no communication with her; and when documents are produced, and a charge founded upon them, it is all-essential for those who have to defend the accused to ascertain first what he or she says about them. A bold forgery always disconcerts opponents, till the principal party can come forward to deny its truth. Yet in that parliament Mary's friends distinctly asserted that the letters were not hers. At Westminster the "French originals" were, we are told, compared with letters of Mary to Elizabeth, and the handwriting declared to be identical. There seems to be some doubt even about the comparison; but, at all events, it was made privately, and neither Mary nor her representatives were ever allowed to see either the originals *or even the copies*. The unfairness of Elizabeth's conduct throughout is a matter of history; and even if we are to acquit her Council of taking

their cue from their mistress, it is certain that it was a one-sided examination. It is certain that the documents were never shown to those whose part it was to test them with severity; and it is certain also that the whole affair was huddled up, and Murray and his friends allowed to go back to Scotland without any thing like a trial. It is certain that, from the moment that the charge was made, Mary behaved boldly and resolutely, as an innocent person, refusing all composition, and waiving her dignity in order to vindicate her character; while the conduct of her accusers was uniformly shuffling, like those who defend their own successful crimes by a charge for which they have no evidence that will bear the light of day. It is certain that Bothwell and Bothwell's servants, at the point of death, declared her innocence; and that the mother of Darnley, who at first doubted it, ended by acknowledging it.

The evidence, therefore, on which Mr. Froude's conclusion rests, if it has any force at all, derives that force from the identity of the handwriting, as ascertained at Westminster. There, I think, I might safely leave the question; for I am not undertaking to prove absolutely the innocence of Queen Mary, but to show that her cause ought not to be dismissed at once, as it has been by Mr. Froude. No one will say that handwriting ought to be allowed to settle a question like this, when the documents themselves present internal reasons against their own acceptance. But what if it can be shown that these "French originals" cannot, even on the supposition of Mary's authorship, have been written by her hand? Then, I think, Mr. Froude's proofs will be finally and entirely demolished.

And yet there appears to be the very greatest probability that such is the case; and if I may throw out an opinion, for which I have no time or space to assign the particular grounds, I believe that if this question were investigated by literary men of the same calibre as those three to whom Mr. Marsden's letters were submitted, they would tell us that the 'original' letters were written in *Scotch*, and that therefore the letters produced at Westminster, which certainly were French, could only have been translations. In that case, the argument from handwriting is blown to the winds. The case stands thus. Mary ordinarily wrote either in Scotch or in French; but supposing her to have written to Bothwell, she would be almost certain to use the language which was the safer of the two. This, in Scotland, would of course be French. He would certainly understand it, for he had been long in France. The letters that were produced by Mary's accusers at York were in Scotch; but those which were shown to Elizabeth's Council at Westminster, and which professed to be the originals, were in

French. Whitaker has shown, though the argument is too long to be even abridged in the space at my disposal, that no French letters were produced before that time. The letters that were 'examined' in the Scotch Privy-Council, and in the Scotch Parliament, were in Scotch; unsealed, and unsigned. Mary was supposed to have sent them in that state to Bothwell!—she, who, according to the first letter, as we have seen, had to beg her paramour to forgive her for not giving 'over-much credit'! If, therefore, any of Mr. Froude's 'experts' were called in then, they must have testified to the handwriting of Mary in Scotch. At Westminster the scene is changed, and the letters are French, and the handwriting is Mary's still! This is the first great difficulty about the copies that were produced at Westminster. The second is, that although we possess the letters now in French, Scotch, and Latin, it is quite clear and undisputed that the Scotch is the original of the three. This was proved by Goodall, but it was also confessed by the French editor. Now, the publication took place by order of Elizabeth and Cecil: they had copies in French of the 'French originals' at Westminster. If our present French version is that which they had, the question is at once decided; for it is evidently a version from the Scotch through the Latin, the maker of which has fallen into several ludicrous blunders, by misreading or misunderstanding what he was translating. There is only one hypothesis by which any loophole can be left for the theory of 'French originals.' It is by supposing that, notwithstanding their existence, and the existence of copies in the hands of the enemies of Mary, they nevertheless chose to publish a *new* French translation from the Latin, having first translated the Latin from the Scotch. Unless this can be proved, it becomes a matter of simple impossibility that the letters shown at Westminster, the handwriting of which was identified with that of Mary, can have been really hers. I have already hinted at a solution of the question, which is at least possible. Of the three which remain, the Scotch version is undoubtedly the original. But it might be possible for criticism to prove from its internal features, not only that it is prior to the French and the Latin versions, but that it is not itself a translation at all. There are some Gallicisms in it, as it appeared to Hume; but then it must be remembered that there were a great many that had made themselves quite at home in the Scotch of that day. It certainly does not read like a translation. I have only further to explain the connexion that may be supposed to exist between the Scotch form of the original letters and the testimony of Crawford. It is clear, then, that if the first letter, so very dif-

ferent from all the others, was made up from the notes taken by Crawford, it is most natural that the draft of it would be in Scotch. He is more likely to have used that language in the notes that he took down from Darnley's mouth, than Mary to have used it in a confidential letter to be sent unsealed to Bothwell. The document on which the forged letter was founded being in Scotch, it is most likely that the letter itself would be put into that language; and that having been done, the others would follow suit. The sonnets were an after-thought—not mentioned when the 'discovery' of the casket and its contents was first proclaimed; there seems to be no doubt that they were originally in French. Their weight in the controversy is little: but they are in some points contradictory to the letters, and mention at least one important fact, which overthrows one of the great charges against Mary.

That Queen Mary was estranged from her miserable and worthless husband is undeniable. It is also undeniable that, within a few months of his murder, she became the wife of one of his murderers. These are the two great presumptions against her; but they are not proofs. The facts can be explained in various ways, so as either to leave her as perfectly innocent and as entirely a victim as Darnley himself—or as sharing throughout in the designs and the guilt of Bothwell—or as guiltless of murder and adultery, but not altogether free from weakness and imprudence. When we consider, not simply her misfortunes, but the set of men and women among whom she was thrown—their readiness for any crime, the blood with which their hands were so continually stained, their fanaticism, and treachery, their unscrupulous venality and mendacity, and their well-practised skill in every art of deceit and imposture—it is certainly no great call on our charity that bids us suspend our judgment, and weigh very carefully every tittle of evidence that comes to us out of that mass of corruption and vice. It may be said that history must tell the truth, and not indulge in 'imaginative sympathies.' Yes; truth—where truth can be had; but history must not give us a picture at any cost,—a true one, if it may be,—but, at all events, a picture. Mr. Froude is severe on those who judge of truth by their emotions—who dispose of evidence that jars on their feelings by the easy assertion that documents were forged, and witnesses tampered with. But it is just as easy to assume the genuineness of disputed documents, as he has done, without discussing it, and to let inquiries made by men like Morton, Murray, and the tools of Elizabeth, authoritatively supersede all later conjectures. The historian is unfaithful to his duty who sacrifices truth to sentiment; but not more so than he who builds up a romance upon evi-

dence too suspicious to be allowed in any court of justice in England, and who exerts himself to the utmost to fascinate his readers by his pictorial and dramatic power, just where history is most obscure, and its facts most disputed.

H. J. C.

Exhūmō.

SHOULD you dream ever of the days departed,—
Of youth and morning, no more to return,—
Forget not me, so fond and passionate-hearted;
 Quiet at last, reposing
 Under the moss and fern.

There, where the fretful lake in stormy weather
Comes circling round the reddening churchyard pines,
Rest, and call back the hours we lost together,
 Talking of hope, and soaring
 Beyond poor earth's confines.

If, for those heavenly dreams too dimly sighted,
You became false,—why, 'tis a story old:
I, overcome by pain, and unrequited,
 Faded at last, and slumber
 Under the autumn mould.

Farewell, farewell! No longer plighted lovers,
Doomed for a day to sigh for sweet return:
One lives, indeed; one heart the green earth covers,—
 Quiet at last, reposing
 Under the moss and fern.

BARRY CORNWALL.

Constance Sherwood.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

I HAD not thought to write the story of my life; but the wishes of those who have at all times more right to command than occasion to entreat aught at my hands, have in a manner compelled me thereunto. The divers trials and the unlooked-for comforts which have come to my lot during the years that I have been tossed to and fro on this uneasy sea—the world—have wrought in my soul an exceeding sense of the goodness of God, and an insight into the meaning of the sentence in Holy Writ which saith, “His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts like unto our thoughts.” And this puts me in mind that there are sayings which are in every one’s mouth, and therefore not to be lightly gainsayed, which nevertheless do not approve themselves to my conscience as wholly just and true. Of these is the common adage, “That misfortunes come not alone.” For my own part, I have found that when a cross has been laid on me, it has mostly been a single one, and that other sorrows were oftentimes removed, as if to make room for it. And it has been my wont, when one trial has been passing away, to look out for the next, even as on a stormy day, when the clouds have rolled away in one direction and sunshine is breaking overhead, we see others rising in the distance. There has been no portion of my life free from some measure of grief or fear sufficient to recall the words that “Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward;” and none so reft of consolation that, in the midst of suffering, I did not yet cry out, “The Lord is my shepherd; His rod and His staff comfort me.”

I was born in the year A.D. 1557, in a very fair part of England, at Sherwood Hall, in the county of Stafford. For its comely aspect, commodious chambers, sunny gardens, and the sweet walks in its vicinity, it was as commendable a residence for persons of moderate fortune and contented minds as can well be thought of. Within and without this my paternal home nothing was wanting which might please the eye, or minister to tranquillity of mind and healthful recreation. I reckon it amongst the many favours I have received from a gracious Providence, that the earlier years of my life were spent amidst such fair scenes, and in the society of parents who ever took occasion from earthly things to lead my thoughts to such as are imperishable, and so to stir up in me a love of the Creator, who has stamped His image on this visible world in characters of so great

beauty; whilst in the tenderness of those dear parents unto myself I saw, as it were, a type and representation of His paternal love and goodness.

My father was of an ancient family, and allied to such as were of greater note and more wealthy than his own. He had not, as is the manner with many squires of our days, left off residing on his own estate in order to seek after the shows and diversions of London; but had united to a great humility of mind and a singular affection for learning a contentedness of spirit which inclined him to dwell in the place assigned to him by Providence. He had married at an early age, and had ever conformed to the habits of his neighbours in all lawful and kindly ways, and sought no other labours but such as were incidental to the care of his estates, and no recreations but those of study, joined to a moderate pursuit of field-sports and such social diversions as the neighbourhood afforded. His outward appearance was rather simple than showy, and his manners grave and composed. When I call to mind the singular modesty of his disposition, and the retiredness of his manners, I often marvel how the force of circumstances and the urging of conscience should have forced one so little by nature inclined to an unsettled mode of life into one which, albeit peaceful in its aims, proved so full of danger and disquiet.

My mother's love I enjoyed but for a brief season. Not that it waxed cold towards me, as happens with some parents, who look with fondness on the child and less tenderly on the maiden; but it pleased Almighty God to take her unto Himself when I was but ten years of age. Her face is as present to me now as at any time of my life. No limner's hand ever drew a more faithful picture than the one I have of her even now engraved on the tablet of my heart. She had so fair and delicate a complexion that I can only liken it to the leaf of a white rose with the lightest tinge of pink in it. Her hair was streaked with gray too early for her years; but this matched well with the sweet melancholy of her eyes, which were of a deep violet colour. Her eyelids were a trifle thick, and so were her lips; but there was a pleasantness in her smile and the dimples about her mouth such as I have not noticed in any one else. She had a sweet womanly and loving heart, and the noblest spirit imaginable; a great zeal in the service of God, tempered with so much sweetness and cordiality that she gave not easily offence to any one, of howsoever different a way of thinking from herself; and either won them over to her faith through the suavity of her temper and the wisdom of her discourse, or else worked in them a personal liking which made them patient with her, albeit fierce with others.

When I was about seven years of age I noticed that she waxed thin and pale, and that we seldom went abroad, and walked only in our own garden and orchard. She seemed glad to sit on a bench on the sunny side of the house even in summer, and on days when by reason of the heat I liked to lie down in the shade. My parents forbade me from going into the village; and, through the perverseness common to too many young people, on account of that very prohibition I longed for liberty to do so, and wearied oftentimes of the solitude we lived in. At a later period I learnt how kind had been their intent in keeping me during the early years of childhood from a knowledge of the woful divisions which the late changes in religion had wrought in our country; which I might easily have heard from young companions, and maybe in such sort as to awaken angry feelings, and shed a drop of bitter in the crystal cup of childhood's pure faith. If we did walk abroad, it was to visit some sick persons, and carry them food or clothing or medicines, which my mother prepared with her own hands. But as she grew weaker, we went less often outside the gates, and the poor came themselves to fetch away what in her bounty she stored up for them. I did not notice that our neighbours looked unkindly on us when we were seen in the village. Children would cry out sometimes, but half in play, "Down with the Papists!" but I witnessed that their elders checked them, especially those of the poorer sort; and "God bless you, Mrs. Sherwood!" and "God save you, madam!" was often in their mouths, as she whom I loved with so great and reverent an affection passed alongside of them, or stopped to take breath, leaning against their cottage-palings.

Many childish heartaches I can even now remember when I was not suffered to join in the merry sports of the 1st of May; for then, as the poet Chaucer sings, the youths and maidens go

"To fetch the flowers fresh and branch and bloom,
And these, rejoicing in their great delight,
Eke each at other throw the blossoms bright,"

I watched the merry wights as they passed our door on their way to the groves and meadows, singing mirthful carols, and bent on pleasant pastimes; and tears stood in my eyes as the sound of their voices died away in the distance. My father found me thus weeping one May-day, and carried me with him to a sweet spot in a wood, where wild-flowers grew like living jewels out of the green carpet of moss on which we sat; and there, as the birds sang from every bough, and the insects hovered and hummed over every blossom, he entertained me with such quaint and pleasant tales, and moved me to

merry laughter by his witty devices; so that I set down that day in my book of memory as one of the joyfullest in all my childhood. At Easter, when the village children rolled pasch eggs down the smooth sides of the green hills, my mother would paint me some herself, and adorned them with such bright colours and rare sentences that I feared to break them with rude handling, and kept them by me throughout the year rather as pictures to be gazed on than toys to be played with in a wanton fashion.

On the morning of the Resurrection, when others went to the top of Cannock Chase to hail the rising sun, as is the custom of those parts, she would sing so sweetly the Psalm which speaketh of the heavens rejoicing and of the earth being glad, that it grieved me not to stay at home; albeit I sometimes marvelled that we saw so little company, and mixed not more freely with our neighbours.

When I had reached my ninth birthday, whether it was that I took better heed of words spoken in my hearing, or else that my parents thought it was time that I should learn somewhat of the conditions of the times, and so talked more freely in my presence, it so happened that I heard of the jeopardy in which many who held the Catholic faith were, and of the laws which were being made to prohibit in our country the practice of the ancient religion. When Protestants came to our house—and it was sometimes hard in those days to tell who were such at heart, or only in outward semblance out of conformity to the queen's pleasure—I was strictly charged not to speak in their hearing of aught that had to do with Catholic faith and worship; and I could see at such times on my mother's face an uneasy expression, as if she was ever fearing the next words that any one might utter.

In the autumn of that year we had visitors whose company was so great an honour to my parents, and the occasion of so much delight to myself, that I can call to mind every little circumstance of their brief sojourn under our roof, even as if it had taken place but yesterday. This visit proved the first step towards an intimacy which greatly affected the tenor of my life, and prepared the way for the direction it was hereafter to take.

These truly honourable and well-beloved guests were my Lady Mounteagle and her son Mr. James Labourn, who were journeying at that time from London, where she had been residing at her son-in-law the Duke of Norfolk's house, to her seat in the country; whither she was carrying the three children of her daughter, the Duchess of Norfolk, and of that lady's first husband, the Lord Dacre of the north. The eldest of these young ladies was of about mine own age, and the others younger.

The day on which her ladyship was expected, I could not sit with patience at my tambour-frame, or con my lessons, or play on the virginals; but watched the hours and the minutes in my great desire to see these noble wenches. I had not hitherto consorted with young companions save with Edmund and John Genings, of whom I shall have occasion to speak hereafter, who were then my playmates, as at a riper age friends. I thought, in the quaint way in which children couple one idea with another in their fantastic imaginations, that my Lady Mounteagle's three daughters would be like the three angels, in my mother's Missal, who visited Abraham in his tent.

I had craved from my mother a holiday, which she granted on the score that I should help her that forenoon in the making of the pasties and jellies, which, as far as her strength allowed, she failed not to lend a hand to; and also she charged me to set the bed-chambers in fair order, and to gather fresh flowers wherewith to adorn the parlour. These tasks had in them a pleasantness which whiled away the time, and I alternated from the parlour to the store-room, and the kitchen to the orchard, and the poultry-yard to the pleasure-ground, running as swiftly from one to the other and as merrily, as if my feet were keeping time with the glad beatings of my heart. As I passed along the avenue, which was bordered on each side by tall trees, ever and anon, as the wind shook their branches, there fell on my head showers of red and gold-coloured leaves, which made me laugh; so easy is it for the young to find occasion of mirth in the least trifle when their spirits are lightsome, as mine were that day. I sat down on a stone bench on which the western sun was shining, to bind together the posies I had made; the robins twittered around me; and the air felt soft and fresh. It was the eve of Martinmas-day—Hallowtide Summer, as our country folk call it. As the sun was sinking behind the hills, the tread of horses' feet was heard in the distance, and I sprang up on the bench, shading my eyes with my hand to see the approach of that goodly travelling-party, which was soon to reach our gates. My parents came out of the front door, and beckoned me to their side. I held my posies in my apron, and forgot to set them down; for the first sight of my Lady Mounteagle as she rode up the avenue with her son at her side, and her three granddaughters with their attendants, and many richly attired serving-men beside, filled me with awe. I wondered if her Majesty had looked more grand on the day that she rode into London to be proclaimed queen. The good lady sat on her palfrey in so erect and stately a manner, as if age had no dominion over her limbs and her spirits; and there was something so piercing and commanding in her eye, that it at once compelled reverence and submission. Her

son had somewhat of the same nobility of mien, and was tall and graceful in his movements; but behind her, on her pillion, sat a small counterpart of herself, inasmuch as childhood can resemble old age, and youthful loveliness matronly dignity. This was the eldest of her ladyship's grand-daughters, my sweet Mistress Ann Dacre. This was my first sight of her who was hereafter to hold so great a place in my heart and in my life. As she was lifted from the saddle, and stood in her riding-habit and plumed hat at our door, making a graceful and modest obeisance to my parents, one step retired behind her grandam, with a lovely colour tinging her cheeks, and her long lashes veiling her sweet eyes, I thought I had never seen so fair a creature as this highborn maiden of my own age; and even now that time, as it has gone by, has shown me all that a court can display to charm the eyes and enrapture the fancy, I do not gainsay that same childish thought of mine. Her sisters, pretty prattlers then, four and six years of age, were led into the house by their governess. But ere our guests were seated, my mother bade me kiss my Lady Mounteagle's hand and commend myself to her goodness, praying her to be a good lady to me, and overlook, out of her great indulgence, my many defects. At which she patted me on the cheek, and said, she doubted not but that I was as good a child as such good parents deserved to have; and indeed, if I was as like my mother in temper as in face, I must needs be such as her hopes and wishes would have me. And then she commanded Mistress Ann to salute me; and I felt my cheeks flush and my heart beat with joy as the sweet little lady put her arms round my neck, and pressed her lips on my cheek.

Presently we all withdrew to our chambers until such time as supper was served, at which meal the young ladies were present; and I marvelled to see how becomingly even the youngest of them, who was but a chit, knew how to behave herself, never asking for any thing, or forgetting to give thanks in a pretty manner when she was helped. For the which my mother greatly commended their good manners; and her ladyship said, "In truth, good Mistress Sherwood, I carry a strict hand over them, never suffering their faults to go unchastised, nor permitting such liberties as many do to the ruin of their children." I was straightway seized with a great confusion and fear that this was meant as a rebuke to me, who, not being much used to company, and something over-indulged by my father, by whose side I was seated, had spoken to him more than once that day at table, and had also left on my plate some victuals not to my liking; which, as I learnt at another time from Mistress Ann, was an offence for which her grandmother would have sharply reprehended

her. I ventured not again to speak in her presence, and scarcely to raise my eyes towards her.

The young ladies withdrew early to bed that night, and I had but little speech with them. Before they left the parlour Mistress Ann took her sisters by the hand, and all of them kneeling at their grandmother's feet craved her blessing. I could see a tear in her eye as she blessed them; and when she laid her hand on the head of the eldest of her granddaughters, it lingered there as if to call down upon her a special benison. The next day my Lady Mounteagle gave permission for Mistress Ann to go with me into the garden, where I showed her my flowers and the young rabbits that Edmund Genings and his brother, my only two playmates, were so fond of; and she told me how well pleased she was to remove from London unto her grandmother's seat, where she would have a garden and such pleasant pastimes as are enjoyed in the country.

"Prithee, Mistress Ann," I said, with the unmannerly boldness with which children are wont to question one another, "have you not a mother, that you live with your grandam?"

"I thank God that I have," she answered; "and a good mother she is to me; but by reason of her having lately married the Duke of Norfolk, my grandmother has at the present time the charge of us."

"And do you greatly love my Lady Mounteagle?" I asked, misdoubting in my folly that a lady of so grave aspect and stately carriage should be loved by children.

"As greatly as heart can love," was her pretty answer.

"And do you likewise love the Duke of Norfolk, Mistress Ann?" I asked again.

"He is my very good lord and father," she answered; "but my knowledge of his grace has been so short, I have scarce had time to love him yet."

"But I have loved you in no time," I cried, and threw my arms round her neck. "Directly I saw you, I loved you, Mistress Ann."

"Mayhap, Mistress Constance," she said, "it is easier to love a little girl than a great duke."

"And who do you affection besides her grace your mother, and my lady your grandam, Mistress Ann?" I said, again returning to the charge; to which she quickly replied:

"My brother Francis, my sweet Lord Dacre."

"Is he a child?" I asked.

"In truth, Mistress Constance," she answered, "he would not be well pleased to be called so; and yet methinks he is but a child, being not older, but rather one year younger than myself, and my dear playmate and gossip."

"I wish I had a brother or a sister to play with me," I said; at which Mistress Ann kissed me and said she was sorry I should lack so great a comfort, but that I must consider I had a good father of my own, whereas her own was dead; and that a father was more than a brother.

In this manner we held discourse all the morning, and, like a rude imp, I questioned the gracious young lady as to her pastimes and her studies and the tasks she was set to; and from her innocent conversation I discovered, as children do, without at the time taking much heed, but yet so as to remember it afterwards, what especial care had been taken by her grandmother—that religious and discreet lady—to instil into her virtue and piety, and in using her, besides saying her prayers, to bestow alms with her own hands on prisoners and poor people; and in particular to apply herself to the cure of diseases and wounds, wherein she herself had ever excelled. Mistress Ann, in her childish but withal thoughtful way, chid me that in my own garden were only seen flowers which pleased the senses by their bright colours and perfume, and none of the herbs which tend to the assuagement of pain and healing of wounds; and she made me promise to grow some against the time of her next visit. As we went through the kitchen-garden, she plucked some rosemary and lavender and rue, and many other odoriferous herbs; and sitting down on a bench, she invited me to her side, and discoursed on their several virtues and properties with a pretty sort of learning which was marvellous in one of her years. She showed me which were good for promoting sleep, and which for cuts and bruises, and of a third she said it eased the heart.

"Nay, Mistress Ann," I cried, "but that must be a heartsease;" at the which she smiled, and answered,

"My grandam says the best medicines for uneasy hearts are the bitter herb confession, and the sweet flower absolution."

"Have you yet made your first communion, Mistress Ann?" I asked in a low voice, at which question a bright colour came into her cheek, and she replied:

"Not yet; but soon I may. I was confirmed not long ago by the good Bishop of Durham; and at my grandmother's seat I am to be instructed by a Catholic priest who lives there."

"Then you do not go to Protestant service?" I said.

"We did," she answered, "for a short time, whilst we stayed at the Charterhouse; but my grandam has understood that it is not lawful for Catholics, and she will not be present at it herself, or suffer us any more to attend it, neither in her own house nor at his grace's."

While we were thus talking, the two little ladies, her sisters, came from the house, having craved leave from the governess to run

out into the garden. Mistress Mary was a pale delicate child, with soft loving blue eyes; and Mistress Bess, the youngest, a merry imp, whose rosy cheeks and dimpling smiles were full of glee and merriment.

"What ugly sober flowers are these, Nan, that thou art playing with?" she cried, and snatched at the herbs in her sister's lap. "When I marry my Lord William Howard, I'll wear a posy of roses and carnations."

"When I am married," said little Mistress Mary, "I will wear nothing but lilies."

"And what shall be thy posy, Nan?" said the little saucy one again, "when thou dost wed my Lord Surrey?"

"Hush, hush, madcaps!" cried Mistress Ann. "If your grandam was to hear you, I doubt not but the rod would be called for."

Mistress Mary looked round affrighted, but little Mistress Bess said in a funny manner, "Prithee, Nan, do rods then travel?"

"Ay; by that same token, Bess, that I heard my lady bid thy nurse take care to carry one with her."

"It was nurse told me I was to marry my Lord William, and Madge my Lord Thomas, and thee, Nan, my Lord Surrey, and brother pretty Meg Howard," said the little lady pouting; "but I won't tell grandam of it an it would be like to make her angry."

"I would be a nun!" Mistress Mary cried.

"Hush!" her elder sister said; "that is foolish talking, Madge; my grandmother told me so when I said the same thing to her a year ago. Children do not know what Almighty God intends them to do. And now methinks I see Uncle Labourn making as if he would call us to the house, and there are the horses coming to the door. We must needs obey the summons. Prithee, Mistress Constance, do not forget me."

Forget her! No. From that day to this years have passed over our heads and left deep scars on our hearts. Divers periods of our lives have been signalised by many a strange passage: we have rejoiced, and, oftener still, wept together; we have met in trembling, and parted in anguish: but through sorrow and through joy, through evil report and good report, in riches and in poverty, in youth and in age, I have blessed the day when first I met thee, sweet Ann Dacre, the fairest, purest flower which ever grew on a noble stem.

Recollections of an Old City.

BY JULIA KAVANAGH.



SOME friends of mine, who have been visiting Geneva recently, said to me: "It is quite altered since you were there. You would not know it again. It is a splendid city now: all the shabby streets are gone." And they began to enumerate the changes which had taken place since we spent a summer by Lake Leman, and which to me seemed deplorable.

There is something perplexing and provoking in being told that a place you knew is altered. You keep a certain image in your mind; you remember that this street was in the shadow, that such a corner house was sunlit; that through yon open gate you saw a quiet courtyard, with a trickling fountain, and a glimpse of green garden and waving trees and breezy sky; and you like the picture, such as it is: but, lo and behold you! improvement steps in, and your picture is gone for ever. The street has been widened; the corner house has been pulled down; the garden is built upon; and if you visit the spot again, you look upon it with sorrow and doubt, and feel that keen and bitter sense—the bitterest we can know, after that of sin—the sense of something lost.

The Geneva of to-day may be magnificent; but the Geneva of a few years back had charms which this has certainly relinquished. Its gates were already gone; but it still had its old fortifications—green mounds, where children played, and peaceful ditches, in which market-gardeners grew salad. Seen from the quays and the bridges, the city looked a fine modern city enough, facing the lake, and with a background of noble mountains. But behind that fair exterior what dear, delightful, dismal old streets,—some steep, like stairs, and provided with banisters,—lanes and alleys and vaulted passages! What ancient houses, with high turrets, conical roofs, and all sorts of projections! and to these houses what crazy wooden fronts, that seemed as if they must creak with every blast! Well might they look misanthropic and stern. Into these houses I confess I never entered. They were charmingly picturesque; but, like all pictures, they were evidently meant to be looked at. Some idea of them I got, however, by glancing over *La Feuille d'Avis*, a little sheet of advertisements which appeared three times a week. One of these advertisements referred to an apartment "on the second floor in the third yard." I often

tried to imagine this third yard. Another advertisement convinced me that, the territory of the Republic being small, lodging-room was naturally scarce. It ran thus: "To let: an alcove" (a recess for a bed in a room) "to a moral man."

Amongst the changes with which I cannot quarrel is that in the number of furnished apartments. They are abundant now, it seems; they were few and far between at that time, and travellers who did not like hotels or boarding-houses had to put up with indifferent accommodation. We lived in a large new house, commanding a fine view of the lake. It was one of the best, but it was certainly very strangely built; unlike a Parisian house, save in size, and at the antipodes of a London one. From under the arched gateway to the fifth floor rose a sort of wall, with banisters to it. The staircase was on one of the four sides of this wall, on the other three were four doors and four kitchen-windows to each floor. Heads were out of these windows from morning till night: children's heads, thick with curls; heads of idle servant-girls, whose persons leaned on red arms lazily folded. But this was not all: on the other side of the staircase there were arched windows that looked into a little triangular court, and in that court more windows appeared. The gossiping that went on from morning till night, the bickerings and the chattering of that double Babel, words cannot tell.

Our landlady was a retired hotel-keeper, sharp, hard, and keen, a thorough business Genevese, with subtle black eyes and a quick tongue. She rented one of the flats in the house for her own benefit, and for that of foreigners in distress. Her only other lodger, besides ourselves, was an Italian refugee, who was also an artist. He was just then engaged in painting portraits of ancestors for a gentleman who was not sure that he had ever had any. One was that of a judge in a square beard, ruff, and ermine; another beamed forth from the canvas in long locks, Vandyke collar, red velvet, and armour; a third had an ample periwig and a laced coat; a fourth wore powder and sombre habiliments. There were also two ladies, one of whom was dressed as a shepherdess. This neat little family party were put out to dry at the artist's window—it was there I saw them; and as fast as they were finished, they were framed magnificently, and sent off to the mansion of their descendant.

Knowing but little of republics then—I mean, practically—I was surprised to find so much of aristocratic feeling in this one. But titles are only one of the forms of aristocracy; and, according to all the accounts I heard, the English Howards, or the French Montmorencies, or the Scotch and Irish sept themselves, could not be prouder of their birth than the aristocracy of Geneva.

Their haunt was, and no doubt is still, around Saint Pierre—far from the lake and the quays, and the shops and the noise of commerce. The upper town, as it was called, had a very solemn and antique look. Around the old cathedral extended cloister-like streets, so calm and silent were they, with fine old trees, and fountains that plashed in the shade. The stone houses were gray with age, the iron-bound gates and balconies were rusty and mouldering; the grass-grown courts seemed to know no tread; silence and repose marked the spot where the Genevese aristocracy then brooded over their defeat. For there had been a revolution in this territory fifty miles square, and power had been wrenched from the hands of the great old families, and a democratic mob had triumphed in the land.

This conquered oligarchy kept up its dignity, however. It consisted of old and honourable Genevese families, some of whom had won titles abroad in the service of foreign princes; and, titled or not, it was obstinately and unyieldingly exclusive. I was told that a first generation of parvenus was rarely admitted within its ranks, yet that wealthy tradesmen would be more welcome than men enriched by gambling in the stocks. Bankers were named to me who pined in vain to enter that charmed circle: the Peri had a better chance of Paradise than they had of Saint Pierre. Yet the Genevese are apt to boast that it takes three Jews to make one of their bankers.

We had friends in Geneva, natives of the city, and as kind and hospitable as strangers need ever wish to meet with. I did my best to obtain information from them concerning the social state of this the smallest, but in many respects the most interesting, of the twenty-two Swiss Cantons. It was no easy task: they were willing, but they were accustomed to all that was new to me. I had to observe and learn for myself; and not being able to go deep, I was satisfied, perforce, with a few glimpses of things.

Two facts struck me when we first arrived—the absence of hand-some carriages and liveries, and a dearth of beggars. I thought at first there were no poor in the place. I learned afterwards that there were some, unfortunately, but that they were proud, and hid. I was not prepared, however, for a fact which, like most significant facts, I ascertained by chance, namely, that though vice, intemperance, and their companion poverty, were to be found in Geneva, there was no such thing in the whole place as that establishment over which we see the three golden balls in London, or the tricolour flag in Paris.

"What!" I said to my informant, "you actually have no pawn-broker?"

"No," he replied with a smile; "we have people who lend money on security, but they are much despised."

Amongst the modern changes which were contemplated in Geneva, I was told that one was the introduction of *rouge et noir*. Would it be wonderful if the *mont de piété* came in too?

Notwithstanding the aristocracy which dwelt in Saint Pierre, I found republicanism and commerce very plainly stamped on the Genevese. One feature in their language was significant of business habits. Like the English, they spared time by shortening words; a sure sign of the practical predominating over the poetic faculty. In talking of their streets they omitted the useless word "rue;" and I was rather startled to hear a pretty girl of their aristocracy mention the public library as "The Public." The working-classes I found independent, stiff, and scarcely civil. They never stand on ceremony with people for the sake of a finer coat or a better dress than that which they may themselves chance to wear. I once stood under an arched doorway in one of the popular streets, waiting for a shower of rain to cease. From the bottom of the alley a rough voice called out "Mademoiselle!" Not thinking I was the person addressed, I did not look round. "Ma bonne demoiselle," repeated the voice: this time I turned, and saw an old applewoman. "Do help me down with this basket," she said civilly, but familiarly; "here have I been waiting ever so long for some one or other to give me a lift."

That she should get "a lift" was evidently a matter of course in the old lady's republican creed. I felt very happy to give her the assistance she required; for her basket, I am proud to say, was not a light one. But this is only the friendly side of republican equality. I witnessed another of its aspects from our windows, which sickened me. Fearful cries made me look out, and in the street below, I saw a young man seized by four stout fellows, and tossed in a blanket till they were tired with the sport. No one meddled; many looked on and laughed. It was only a joke, I was told afterwards; and these sort of jokes, I was also told, were rather frequent in the working-classes.

This want of refinement, to call it by the very mildest word, was enough to shake one's faith in the power of book-knowledge. The Genevese working men and women are very well informed. The Sisters of St. Vincent of Paul, who had a house for the education of Catholic children, told us that the standard of education which they considered good enough for Paris children would not answer the Genevese Catholics. On the subject of religion I could not get any thing like information. My friends, who were all Protestants, seemed to feel sore when it was alluded to; and all I learned was the general knowledge that atheism, and infidelity, and dissent were hard at work in this old and once formidable stronghold of Calvinism.

But I am bound to confess that Geneva social and religious did

not seem to me any thing so attractive as Geneva picturesque. Few cities have been so favoured by Nature as this. What do we know about skies and their aspects, about light and its changes, in cities built in plains? We saw the lake from our windows, and its changes seemed to me as infinite and as rapid as those of the sea. I have seen it crimson and gold at sunrise; glassy gray in calm weather; brilliantly blue when the north wind rose, with sudden dashes of emerald green, as some cloud passed over it; neutral tint, as the sky changed, with streaks of inky blackness and touches of white foam, on which followed violet, dark or pale. No artist would dare to paint such realities; as to the effects of light and mist, they were as marvellous as any Turner ever showed us. There were mornings when, without fog in the streets, the sky, the mountains, and the lake, visible, but not distinct, were seen through a soft yet glittering haze, that made it impossible to tell where each ended and the other began.

The lake is, of course, the great attraction of Geneva; next to it comes the Rhone. It was then spanned by little wooden bridges; and old rickety houses, also of wood, resting on pillars, rose from its waters. Rows of washerwomen knelt in roofed boats and scrubbed and slapped away Genevese linen. It was something to stand on one of those bridges and look at the populous city, with bits of blue mountain in the distance, whilst below the glorious river, after crossing the lake, rushed on swift as a torrent to meet the white Arve coming down from the glaciers of Mont Blanc. Its waters were of the darkest greenish blue, touched with foam, deep as a flood, yet so transparently clear, that from where we stood we could count every pebble in their bed. They sped on past the town, through banks of bright verdure, with old water-mills, above which rose pleasant gardens and white houses, and beyond them all the Jura deeply blue.

The country-houses around Geneva are numerous and very delightful summer abodes. So deep and exquisite is the luxury of a country residence in this beautiful scenery, that the very working-men often take a room for the summer, go to it on a Saturday night, and return on the Monday morning to their weekly toil. In one of these pleasant chalets we were frequent visitors. Love, peace, and joy then dwelt in that abode. Dreary changes have taken place since that time: death and sorrow have stepped in; the aged have sunk into the grave; children have bloomed into youth and died; the strong have been cut off in their prime; and those who were spared have made themselves another home in another land. Some other happy family now enjoys that pleasant old house, with its low dark rooms, and its garden, whence we so often saw the sun set on Mont Blanc.

Mont Blanc is the great lion of Geneva, but he is not a lion that can be seen daily. We spent six weeks watching for him from the bridge, whence he is seen best, before we could catch a glimpse of him. We began to think him a myth or an impostor, when one evening he suddenly surprised us by making his appearance. After that we saw him frequently; always towards sunset, if we could. It is a grand sight: as day declines, the lake, the mountains, become all gold; then dark creeping shadows invade them, stealthily stealing higher and higher. Whilst all beneath is cool and gloomy, Mont Blanc, triumphing in his height, turns rosy red on the pale sky. This is the time of his glory, fleeting, though exquisitely beautiful. Soon the vivid hues turn paler and paler and fade away, then vanish. A coldness like that of death gathers around every snowy peak; green livid tints settle in every cleft; mists shroud the whole; and, seen through them, still rises the great mountain—the giant spectre of the night.

The Genevèse are great pedestrians, and ladies think nothing of taking a twenty miles' walk in the surrounding mountains. We undertook one of these excursions with our friends. We walked up the Salève; lunched in Savoy; took a carriage and had a drive in France; and spent the evening in Geneva. There are other excursions less trying and even more beautiful than this, though it seemed magical then to me. Nothing could exceed the variety and loveliness of the wild-flowers on our way up the mountain; and what a prospect was that we enjoyed when we had reached its summit! On either side of us spread a vast cultivated plain, fertile and beautiful. The Jura bounded that to our left, Mont Blanc that to our right; descending from its glaciers, the Arve, whose waters preserve in summer the chillness of snow, flowed white and glittering through Savoy to meet the Rhone beyond Geneva. The city we had left in the morning now lay below us, like a field of tiles; whilst Lake Lemman, a clear and calm mirror, spread away for miles. Whichever way we looked, whichever way we turned, our view was limited by nothing less than mountains or sky.

Excursions to the towns and villages on the banks of the lake are, thanks to steamboats, cheap and easy. I remember one which we took in the month of July, and during which—it lasted three days—we were favoured with unbroken fine weather, to the delight and admiration of our Genevèse friends, so variable and treacherous is the climate. We visited Lausanne, Villeneuve, Chillon, Montreux, and Vevay, and saw some of the most exquisite scenery mortal eyes can behold. The country around Geneva is very beautiful, but you must not expect the wildness or the romance of Nature there; these

she keeps for the narrow but grand region which is called the *fond du lac*. Near Geneva the lake spreads large and clear between green and cultivated coasts, with here and there pretty-looking towns and villages that seem to dip in the cool waters. On the left, the long blue line of Jura bounds the horizon, enclosed on the right by the mountains of Savoy, beyond which, miles away, rise the white Alps and kingly Mont Blanc. This is fine; but it is as one approaches Ouchy, which lies at the foot of Lausanne, that the scenery becomes striking. The red-tile roofs and spires of Lausanne rise on a height; a steep road leads to the town—a real Alpine city. You see broad streets, houses, and shops, and you fancy yourself in the centre of tame, commonplace civilisation; but you chance to look up—lo! there is a green grassy bank rising above the roofs, with trees through which the breeze is blowing; you look down—behold a valley with a torrent and a noisy water-mill. A very fine bridge puzzled me much. I peeped over the parapet and saw green gardens, houses, orchards, banks of trees, any thing and every thing but the river, though I heard a low rushing sound of flowing water. The street staircases beat Geneva hollow. We went up and down some that might have led one to the tower of Babel.

I am not sure that Lausanne possesses many lions; at all events, we visited but one—the cathedral. The summer sun shone brightly in the clear cool aisles. But how vacant looked that noble church, now that it was deserted by the faith for which and by which it had been built, and possessed by that cold form of worship which vainly tried to fill it! I looked in vain for the pictures, the ex-votos, the altars, and, above all, for the poor and the needy and the sorrowful, who in former times would have been found here kneeling and praying, seeking and finding consolation. We were alone with the keeper, a decent woman, who in a monotonous voice told us the little there was to tell, and showed us a few tombstones. In one, significant relic of the past to the present, slept a Pope of the Middle Ages; I have forgotten his name and history, and do not know what strange storm of troubled times brought him so far from the See of St. Peter to a foreign shore, soon to become an alien one.

The views from Lausanne are celebrated: the finest is that from the Signal, a high commanding spot which looks down over the whole city. We went to it through a lovely green valley and a pleasant little wood; and though the heat was great, we stayed there until sunset. The Signal is a narrow green enclosure, shaded by a few trees. We found seats, a young woman who kept refreshments, a screaming baby, a lame dog, and a shabby, bearded, but intelligent-looking man with a telescope. He proved to be the husband of the

young woman, and the father of the baby. He entered into conversation with us, and informed us that he had made his telescope; that he could make clocks, watches, pictures on glass, and the prettiest little wire men and women, which, being enclosed in a bottle of water, proved, heaven knows how, the pressure of air. Seeing that I looked dull and stupid, he kindly stooped to an example. Having respectfully begged my permission, he took hold of my left thumb, informed me that I was to consider it the cork of an imaginary bottle, and, by a few good squeezes, illustrated the pressure of air on the said bottle to the full satisfaction of the poor cork.

I am afraid that all these mechanical inventions had done little for the poor fellow's prosperity. He questioned us about Geneva. He seemed to contemplate visiting it; he evidently suspected that people were fonder of looking through telescopes there than they were, it seems, in Lausanne. His wife was a sly little thing with a babyish voice. She told us how she made an Englishman look through the telescope. He was leaving the Signal without doing so, when quite carelessly, *sans faire semblant de rien*, she went and looked. "I see Thonon," she said to her husband; "I see Evian. I see a white cow; I see a red one." The red cow proved irresistible; the victim yielded to his fate, and, *généreux comme un étranger*, left a silver franc behind him. Now, in this seeming *naïveté* I saw a good deal of shrewdness. Your innocent people, who seem to open their little wiles to you, are the most dangerous schemers! What could we do after this but look through the telescope, and lay down our franc?

I confess I have completely forgotten the marvels the telescope showed us; but I never can forget the view from the Signal. Standing in Switzerland, we looked on Savoy. We saw the lake in its full extent, and in all its windings, for forty miles and more. The view was finest towards the Valais. There Leman slept in the shadow of stern and rugged mountains—lovely child for so wild a cradle! Some of these mountains were half clothed with chestnut-trees, and had a look of southern softness and verdure; others were either covered with gloomy firs, or rose barren and dreary; immense quarries of stone, whence all the towns on the lake, from Geneva to Villeneuve, were built. The outlines of all were bold, precipitous, and fantastic. One spot, no doubt on account of its terrible beauty, was called La Roche d'Enfer. When the red sunlight fell upon it and defined it on the sky with its deep shadows, that seemed like yawning pits and unfathomed abysses, it did look as if scathed by fire of the Evil One. It gave me what I could not have thought that a mountain with a lake between it and me would give me—a sense of uneasiness and dread.

Views, however fine, are seldom perfect at noonday; the air quivers with heat, the intense light dazzles the eyes: but at sunset what a change! On this evening it was magical. The glorious disk went down without a cloud behind the darkness of Jura. The lake became of a deep liquid blue, light purple mists spread over it, and floated like a cool veil around the base of the opposite mountains, whilst their summits of rock or snow reddened fast in a pale sky. Alas! these are the aspects of nature that make one long to be lyrical: the subtle voice of song alone can give them back; and even then how weakly! There is but one great poet for every generation; and, whilst he alone can speak, the rest must feel and be mute, or acknowledge in their very language the powerlessness of words to tell the glories of that magnificence which the most ignorant as well as the most gifted can see.

The next morning we went down to Ouchy for the steamer which was to take us on to Villeneuve. We now entered the wilder and more beautiful, though also more restricted, part of the lake. The Jura was soon hidden, the larger towns vanished, every where the lake was enclosed by the mountains of Vaud and of Savoy, with here and there a white village rising among vineyards, or seen from beneath the broad shadow of chestnut-trees. We passed by Vevay and Chillon, which, as soon as we had left Villeneuve, an ugly little town, we went to visit. The massive and turreted old chateau rises from the lake in a wild spot, with nothing in view save waters smooth and deep, steep mountains, and beyond their rocks and snows the broad clear sky.

I had travelled but little then, and had no experience of cicerones. About Chillon I had kept myself in that state of vague half-knowledge which leaves something to the imagination; but, *bongré, malgré*, like the wedding-guest detained by the mariner, I now had to hear all about it. Our tormentor was the keeper of the place, a fat red man, melting with the heat of a July morning. He led us to Bonnivard's dungeon; and never feeling the rebuke of that solemn old vault,—with its slits through which daylight scarcely filters, its stone pillars to which prisoners were chained until their weary feet wore out the floor of rock, its walls that still bear the dreary mementoes of their captivity—all things that seemed to me to implore silence and peace,—he began in the following breathless style: "The origin of Chillon is lost in the gloom of time," &c. When he had despatched Bonnivard, he showed us the captive's pillar, and on the walls around the names of Byron, Shelley, Lamartine, and *tutti quanti*. So that whosoever felt tempted to add another name to so many names famous and obscure—and it required little celebrity to

be on this dreadful man's list—was aware beforehand of thereby belonging to this precious exhibition. We were next shown the black beam from which prisoners were hung, the stone on which Jews were massacred—in short, all the dismal horrors of a fortress in the Middle Ages. After which, we were coolly handed over to Caroline—a prim pale girl in a round straw hat. The papa—or the master of Caroline, I know not which—evidently kept to himself all the dainty tragic tit-bits of the chateau, and left her the dull uninteresting drudgery of empty rooms, old cannons, and so on. Epicurean old gentleman! Chillon was his book, which he was ever improving, rounding, smoothing, and publishing, without having ever had the trouble of writing it.

From Chillon we walked to Montreux. We left the high-road, which was burning, and went up a narrow and shady path high in the mountains. Above us green slopes rose on the blue sky, and descended below us to the very edge of the lake, as clear and as blue. There were few vineyards, but many pastures, thickly strewn with broad chestnut and walnut trees, beneath which we often rested. Every now and then we came on some mountain-stream leaping down the rocks. The views were fine, but often broken. Sometimes we walked in a grassy woodland. Then a sudden opening seemed to bring us to the very heart of the mountains; then trees parted, and the hidden lake once more appeared below us like a bright picture.

We stopped at Montreux, where we were to spend the night. From the church of Montreux we got our last glimpse of Chillon. This little house of God, which is too ancient not to have belonged to an older worship than that which now owns it, stands lone and gray on the slope of the mountain. Facing the porch is a low building: the rustic parish-library, with a poor-box, and English and French verses soliciting charity. A bench resting against the wall awaited the tired traveller; around extended a little terrace. An old woman, who sat and knitted whilst she minded children playing, pointed out to us an old stone font which lay buried in the grass; a low wall enclosed the whole place—ah, how small it was!—over which trees cast their shade. On that wall we sat, looking at Chillon. We saw it far below us, rising white and cool from the glassy lake, with its background of mountains. In the trees overhead the birds sang sweetly, and somewhere near us flowed an invisible stream, heard not seen. It seemed to me then that a spot more wild, more lovely, more fit to haunt memory, I should never see; nor have I seen such.

We left it, thinking we should assuredly return on some future

day. We walked to Vevay, following solitary paths, crossing shallow streams on shaking bridges of planks, every where surrounded by scenery so wild and romantic that when we reached Vevay, and saw the fine view for which it is celebrated, we regretted more what we had left behind than what we had now found. The next day the steamer took us back to Geneva.

This, too, when we left it a few weeks later for the south, we thought we should see again. Every time we passed through some pleasant spot, through some bright landscape, or fine old Italian city, we indulged in the same hope. But when was life shaped according to its desires? Time has consumed days and years since then, and of all the places we saw in the long space of two years, but one has been revisited; the rest remain in the background of memory, gradually fading away, until some chance word, some unexpected incident, calls them up once more. The new Geneva made me think of the old; and this brought with it a succession of bright and noble landscapes, of vivid images, which I should be glad to think that I have painted in words, if I did not know that words are cold and poor when they attempt such glorious realities.

The French Exhibition of 1864.

It is but a few years since the schools of French and English art were all but unknown to each other. Amongst the professors of each there were, doubtless, minds of more excursive range, who knew pretty well what their neighbours were about. They were, however, the minority in a mass. It cannot be said that the *omne ignotum pro magnifico* theorem was, in this instance, exemplified. On the contrary, the French gave the much-disrelished islander a mere minimum of credit for initiation into the mysteries of either palette or chisel; while the Briton, toiling sedulously, and with high ambition of rivaling, at least, the old masters of Holland and Flanders, associated the whole of Frenchmen's labours with the pseudo-classic school of David—with Napoleonic battle-pieces, and with such landscape as had been made ingeniously familiar with the walls of hotel saloons.

The great year 1855—that jubilee of art—which, in Paris, brought all the schools of the Christian world into concourse, terminated effectually this strange and unnatural mystification and alienation. Then, close beside those vast halls, where all the varieties of French pictorial inspiration, from its pretentious epic down to the diamond Meissonier miniatures, were ranged, like a *grande armée*, the English gallery presented an abundant array of its characteristic cabinet canvases. It must be confessed, however, that the recognition, on this occasion, of the British stranger was neither particularly courteous nor flattering. French artists and French critics affected a gape of wonderment at what they would fain have depreciated as something—take it for all in all—at once original, abnormal, and bizarre. In England we had been habitually firm in the faith that ours was a supreme school for colour. Whatever might be our weaknesses in other quarters, there, at all events, we had emulated the great spirits of the *cinque cento*; but, behold! all this vanished before the fastidiousness of the critics, whose lucubrations teemed through the French press; and About, their master-spirit, in his review of the British collection, after having dismissed unceremoniously Mulready, Landseer, and Maclise, condescended to concede thus far, and no farther:

“Cependant l'Angleterre a des colorists. Si je disais qu'elle en a beaucoup, je mentirais, comme M. Barnum; mais elle a quelques-uns. Comptons sur nos doigts: M. Knight, Sir C. Eastlake, M. Poole, M. Danby. Voilà quatre peintres de genre qui sont Anglais,

qui ont du talent, et qui peignent avec une brosse et non pas avec un clou."

Since the epoch, as it may be styled, when such good-tempered and honest strictures were distributed—when it was recorded that all English painters, except the happy four named, laid on their colours *rather with a nail than a brush*, a considerable and sustained intimacy has grown up between the two schools, though far more, it must be admitted, to the substantial advantage of French artists than of ours. A continuous series of exhibitions of their productions makes London cognisant of the merits of their *élite*, and, happily for them, directs a flow of British gold to their ateliers, with rates of return yielding, compared with ordinary continental prices, a most material *ad valorem* augmentation. There is but little reciprocity in this matter; for Paris sees but few English easel creations, and, for the most part, but knows of them through the ineffective medium of engravings. This is, in no slight measure, owing to London, in its vast wealth, being the market-gulf for all manner of produce, physical and intellectual. Thus the population of Paris is not unfrequently on the brink of *émeute*, when empty *halles* make known the fact, that all the vegetables of the day have been transmitted to the shores of *perfidie Albion*.

Familiarised, as we now are, with the merits of French art, as well as moved by a general liberal interest in its various presentments, a notice of the Exhibition which opened at the commencement of May will probably be not unacceptable to the readers of our periodical. It is rendered remarkable by this being the first year of the new annual system which has now been adopted in Paris, as it has been long the practice in London. New rules have also been introduced for trial in the management of the Exhibition, which cannot but prove interesting to the profession. In the first place, the merits of pictures, in reference to the occasion, are now submitted to a jury elected, for three-fourths of its members, by the body of artists, who have already received honours; the remaining fourth being nominated by the Government. By a jury also is the question of honours, *i.e.* medals, to be decided. No artist is to forward more than two works to be displayed. Without pausing to make any comment upon these innovations, we shall proceed to give all that can well be permitted, by our distribution of space, to a general review of the works exposed in the spacious saloons and the central garden of the *Palais de l'Industrie*.

Even on a first *coup-d'œil*, a marvellous change attracts attention between this and past French Exhibitions—viz. a diminution next door to disappearance of the military element, and the substitution, in

its place, of sacred subjects. Even on the walls of the noble vestibule of the central saloon, where the two great flights of stairs meet, instead of the accustomed miscellanea of subjects, five of a deeply religious theme meet the eye. One of these must arrest the visitor's attention, being a copy, by M. Paul Blaize, of Raphael's "Vision of Ezekiel," painted on tile, and rendered part and parcel thereof by encaustic process. Through the employment of this agent, a long-desired but hitherto unattained expedient for subjecting painting to the most severe atmospheric visitations—even on the exterior walls of churches—may be considered as attained. It is only to be hoped that the zeal of the operator in this experiment may be fully rewarded by the discovery of some further process, through which the glaring reflex from the surface of the tile may be modified away. As it is, here we have a potent copy of one of the most sublime inspirations of "*Il divino*," which may be exposed, without apprehension of injury, to the worst influences of sun or storm.

On passing from this vestibule into the great central saloon, a total and mysterious change seems to come upon us, "like the sweet south," or any other gentle, in place of a turbulent, element. Here the poor *pequin* of the Paris *pavé* had ever been, as it were, prescriptively plunged into all the horrors of war. The blind man associated the colour of scarlet, as described to him, with the sound of a trumpet; so all these battle-fields or blood-reeking breaches, obtruding their literal horrors upon one, on all sides, seemed to fill the air with the rattle of tin drums and rifled muskets, and one's nerves were paralysed with the imaginary thunders of artillery flashing far or near. All that is here, for the nonce at least, changed; one full-sized illustration of war alone seizes the attention of the visitor, and it is not of the truculent class; while, upon glancing round, we find no less than eleven religious subjects intended for church-walls: and, behold! full-length portraits of a cardinal, two bishops, and a judge or two beside, occupy those places of honour, which seemed to have been, by prescriptive right, monopolised by

"Captain, or colonel, or man-at-arms."

The like remark applies to pretty nearly every saloon of the Exhibition, and might be taken to indicate that a higher and better influence had wrought a redeeming revolution in the locality, were it not that a glaringly discordant tale is told in the extraordinary redundancy of those undraped immodesties, utterly gross, in the worst sense of the term, which assuredly, like their originals, should be reserved for the mysteries of the studio. In these we have but the glaring evidence of that prevalent pruriency which mingles disproportionately

in almost all French lighter works of either literature or art, and which vitiates Parisian printshop-windows—even in establishments of highest pretensions—with elegant obscenities :

—"nec savior ulla
Pestis et ira Deum Stygiis sese extulit undis,"

Recent death has deprived France of some of her school's greatest masters—Delaroche, Vernet, and Hypolite Flandrin—in whom, but more especially the first and last, that tone of genuinely elevated inspiration was found, which might best have rebuked and counteracted—cure it could not—this favourite vice. Successors worthy to fill the places they have vacated have not as yet appeared; although Cabanel, whose exquisitely poetic and solemn picture of "The Christian Martyr," and Barrias, so well introduced, a few years since, from Rome, by the epic elevation and pathos of his "Exiles of Tiberius," seem both to have in them the elements of a congenial ambition. Their loss might be supposed to cause a most serious void in the present Exhibition, more particularly as some of the younger favourites of the school—such as Rosa Bonheur, Troyon, and Cabanel to whom we have alluded—have not found it convenient to contribute on this occasion; but, singular as it may seem, so abundant has been the development of good art in France, more particularly in landscape and in the indefinitely wide range of composition styled *genre*, that no general impression of weakness will be felt by the skilled eye in a strict scrutiny of these saloons.

If, however, a void in native good things might have been discernible, it so happens that a corps of foreign auxiliaries comes in in sufficient strength to redeem the default. Singularly enough it is, and equally felicitous, that almost all these contributions from the *extérieur* are above an average merit. This may be attributed to the probability that only those foreign artists, who have reason to entertain a conviction of having produced successful works, venture to forward their canvases to the judgment and award of a French jury. Mortifying, indeed, it would be to have a picture sent home across France, peradventure by *petite vitesse*, with a brand of rejection upon it. Be that as it may, it must be admitted by impartial observers that, taking the whole foreign pictures here exhibited *en masse*, they would counterbalance almost any equal number of French works selected from the vast collection in which they form so small a minority. It may also be emphatically affirmed, that in these works, for the most part, a special characteristic of style—an idiosyncrasy—is discernible; and this must be the more jealously insisted upon, inasmuch as we find one of the most popular French critics assert, in

most piquant self-sufficiency, most sparkling richness of witty protest, most—shall it be added?—refined effrontery, as follows:

“En résumé, l'école anglaise est la seule au monde qui ne relève pas de la nôtre, et qui ait gardé une originalité marquée.”

The absurd recklessness of this assertion, when directed towards the great German school of Bavaria, is obvious. Although not so glaringly inapplicable to the men of Holland and Flanders, it is substantially scarcely less so; and these worthy successors of a noble line of progenitors in art may repel such modest suggestions with the ridicule they merit. The latter might challenge France, or indeed all Europe, to give a rival to that Gallait, who, to subjects of highest historic interest, has brought a transcendent ministration of art. Oh, most rare combination! But, after all, let the most facetious and satiric of French writers answer himself as to the originality and didactic authority of his French school. Some score pages onward from where the above extract came in, and in total oblivion of its past enunciation, he thus appreciates his countrymen:

“Aujourd'hui l'école française n'est qu'une immense collection d'individualités diverses, ou plutôt il n'y a pas plus d'école française. Ce n'est pas que tous nos artistes soient originaux: l'un imite les Hollandais, l'autre les Vénitiens, l'autre les Florentins, l'autre les Espagnols, l'autre son voisin.”

While, as has been remarked, the field has in this instance been relinquished by the accustomed military phalanxes, and in their place came in a concourse of sacred illustrations, it must be confessed that the change has been to little purpose. No artist has, in fact, appeared worthy to succeed him who has just departed—that Hypolite Flandrin, through whom the sincere verve of solemn inspiration had breathed; whose processional frescoes (to proceed no farther) on the frieze of St. Vincent de Paul may rank amongst the most elevated and refined creations of modern art; who, in fine, well merited that glowing biographical tribute which, in one of the leading art-periodicals of the day, has been devoted to his memory by the Right Rev. the Bishop of Nismes.

There are but few, indeed, of the very numerous sacred canvases found in this collection of which the continued contemplation would not prove a severe penance; so generally do they amalgamate ambition and defective taste in both conception and execution. There are, however, two works by Jobbé-Duval—a pupil of Paul Delaroche and Gleyre—illustrative of the life of St. Francis de Sales, which are assuredly exceptions to this stricture. They display both feeling in expression and a subtle skill in grouping. They are alone deficient in power, not in harmony of colour. They well deserve the honours

of the chief saloon, and we trust will be the precursors of some future great things.

The single great military canvas—great from being worthy the vast halls of Versailles, and which holds the place of honour in the central saloon—is from the well-known pencil of Janet-Lange, pupil of Vernet. There is an artistic moral impressed upon this fine work which rebukes those wide scenes of slaughter, those accumulated commonplace horrors of battle, that go to illustrate how

“Ten thousand perils do environ
The man that meddles with cold iron,”

with which we have, in this quarter, so habitually offended. It tells in a single incident, expressed with the vividness of a lightning-flash, the story of a wide and fearful contest. The subject illustrated is the attack and defeat of the Mexican cavalry by Colonel Brincourt, at the head of the Chasseurs d'Afrique. A single gallant Mexican cavalier, in his most picturesque costume, occupies the whole front of the canvas. Man and horse, large as life, sweep transversely across, in wild retreat, through a wilderness of prickly cactus; while half-way turned round in his saddle, the rider prepares a desperate back-thrust of his lance for the French leader, who gains fearfully upon him. The dim forms of other chasseurs perceptible in the background, amid clouds of smoke and dust, indicate the headlong rout, of which this is the distinct revelation. All that is in the foreground here would have done honour to the hand of Jericault. It seems to compel the spectator to hold his breath for a while.

In striking contrast to this Homeric canvas is one immediately beneath, also military, but comparatively—shall it be said?—

“In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,”

Not exactly; but yet a very small surface; not more than would accommodate the head of the Mexican above. This, peradventure, is the gem of the whole collection—the long and eagerly expected historic miniature of Meissonier, “*L'Empereur à Solferino*.” It has a companion at the opposite side of the saloon—Napoleon, 1814, or Napoleon on his retreat after Leipsic. These meet the inquiry, how the dealer in daguerreotype *genre* and interiors would grapple with a high historic theme in landscape and daylight. He has come out of the trial *Arcadiâ judice*—that is, in the judgment, as it would seem, of his Arcadian professional brothers—with complete success and a great accession of honour. The first-named picture represents the Emperor Napoleon III. at the battle of Solferino, on horseback, somewhat towards the middle distance of the composition, with his staff be-

hind him, while he notes the progressive and final attack on the distant castled heights. He is on the edge of a ravine—around and beyond, the country is broken and undulating, until it swells up to the Austrian strong position. Although the chief figure is thus at a considerable distance from the eye of the spectator, and, in pose, turned nearly three-quarters away, yet the figure and contour of the individual is given with such singular fidelity, that it must at once be recognised. So also is it with that of General Fleury, which stands nearest; and it is probable that the same might be affirmed of each component part of the whole group. The entire picture is worked up with conscientious minuteness, without any meanness of effect. Gray clouds, rolled ominously in indication of rain-storm, which closed in the battle, cover the whole sky, and give something of monotony to the aspect of the landscape below. Nevertheless, the general effect of the work is extremely brilliant; and so it might stand beside a Wouvermans. As a historic composition, it has one palpable defect, and that is the absence of the phenomena of a great battle; but for some light lines to indicate files of soldiers mounting to Solferino, there is no revelation of the fearful scene which Napoleon III. contemplated, and with much-trying nerve, on the occasion here illustrated.

The second of Meissonier's pictures gives a view of the *Napoleon* riding at the head of a line of staff and guards over a road deplorably wintry and foul in half-melted snow; while parallel to this foreground line, and in the middle distance, the wayworn columns of the army move mistily along. A more dismal scene could scarcely be depicted. Each individual in its *dramatis personæ* seems to droop in despondency. In the brooding brow of the isolated leader alone, deep forethought and unconquerable resolution are stamped. This picture is finished up to the last-fallen flake of snow. The effect of air which separates the gray charger of the Emperor from the grizzled ground beneath and around, is masterly in the highest degree. When one turns from this retreat, set forth in such unsparing fidelity of horror, and notes the companion, successful Solferino, on the opposite wall—looking upon this picture and upon that, can the conclusion be avoided that M. Meissonier has resolved to lay a most supremely flattering unction to the soul of his good lord and master, Napoleon III.?

Portraiture, like the warlike vein, has been singularly discreet in this Exhibition. If this be owing to the jury system, it is an appreciable advantage. Perhaps, and more likely, it results from all-pervading photographic rivalry?

Winterhalter, as is his mode, flies at the highest game. We have from him a full-length portrait of the Prince Imperial, and a second

bust of the Empress—companion to that which is now so familiarly known from the exquisitely delicate engraving. The Prince's face is painted with great sweetness, but with a slight shadow of sadness, which had been better away. In deleterious harmony with this is an extremely cold and slate-coloured landscape background. On the whole, a more sunny thing would have been more to the purpose. Such we find to be the front face of the Empress, which is executed with the artist's purest tints and firmest touch. It is very lovely, but not more so, be it said, *pace tuâ*, than its original.

A full-length portrait in the chief saloon (No. 502) of a judge standing, in his scarlet robe, from the pencil of an almost unknown artist, Duban, cannot fail to attract the attention of amateur or artist. That difficult monotony of robe is subdued with a master's skill; and the face, thin, subtle, and sagacious, is painted with a facile power, which affects without obtruding. It will be surprising if M. Duban become not much more familiar with fame than he has been. A portrait of the Abbé Gabriel by H. Lehmann—a face and figure in which the full development of plumpness could no farther go—is quite a masterpiece of the Ingres school. It is rounded out like a billiard-ball, without perceptible touch—photography of painting. In something of the same style is a portrait by Gerome, but dryer and dryer still, and as far as possible removed from all reminiscence of Titian or Vandyke. In perfect and happy contrast with these will be found the portrait of a lady, by E. Faure. In this charming work there is a graceful and refined style of handling—an obvious handling—without a trace of coarseness, but sparkling with a transparent brilliancy, similar to that which, in a masterpiece of line-engraving, makes mezzotint appear dull. An Eve, by the same artist, ranks in the highest class of that division of subject. In a word, M. Faure progressively realises the hopes which he gave, in past Exhibitions, of winning some of the best honours of his profession. Madame Browne (French, notwithstanding her name), known so familiarly here and in London, since your last great art-review, by her picture of the Sister of Charity and sick child, sustains her repute of a forcible colourist by the portrait of a sweet young girl; and Madame Frédérique O'Connell (*née à Berlin*) still justifies the facetious eulogium of which she has been the subject: "Madame O'Connell peint comme un maître; aveugle qui ne le voit, et injuste qui le nie." Amongst other portrait-painters, who have fairly distinguished themselves on this occasion, we may note the Belgian, De Winne; the Prussian, Schauss; the American, May; the Italian, Marzocchi de Belluchi; the Russian, Tchoumakoff; and the Hungarian, Horovitz.

In the absence of Troyon from this Exhibition, it loses, perhaps, the best of the French landscape masters, who has made pure nature his model, and, without falling into imitation of the great bygone men of the Low Countries, has approached them in honourable rivalry. Daubigny is his best representative, with two scenes which one might fancy to have been dashed on to the canvas "under the greenwood tree," so fresh and pure are they in their deep rich tints. The pupils of this school are, however, too undefined and splashy in their foliage. Strongly contrasted with these, and more especially with their love for the dank verdure of nature, comes M. Corot, in whose poetic fantasies it would be difficult indeed to discover phenomena of this every-day world. His effects are wholly those of an idealist: he produces unquestionably singular effects of "air, thin air," and fables of scenery, perfectly consistent in themselves. His favourite tints are strongly *bleuâtre*—to use a French word—and his trees seem insubstantial in their ever-evanishing undefinedness. M. Corot is a favourite amongst his countrymen, possibly for his accomplished sleight-of-hand: he is decorated. Much his superior, although as yet unhonoured by a ribbon, we take to be M. Felix Thomas, who is *terque felix* in his Views on the Banks of the Tibur. In this the richest tones of the palette are, with exquisite delicacy as well as force, and a certain pearliness of effect very similar to passages in the works of Sir Augustus Calcott, lavished upon a wide and glowing landscape. The golden Tibur, which is inexhaustible in such scenes as these, wherewith all the hearts of the foreign students are gladdened and their pencils inspired, has had another worthy worshipper in M. Lanoüe ("premier grand prix de Rome"), whose view near the Aqua Acetosa, in the Campagna, strongly resembles that of M. Thomas, with much the same gorgeousness of colouring and strongly-felt aerial perspective. The work of M. Lanoüe is elaborated into a harder surface than what we should venture to consider its more masterly comrade-picture. Both artists are now well known to French exhibitions, and have realised the best hopes to which their early honours gave rise.

Amongst the numerous Belgian landscapes in this collection, two by De Cock—views in the neighbourhood of Ghent—will more surely attract notice. They also are stamped with the reality of zealously-studied nature. They are woodland, with rich marshy verdure below, and emulate the dark, deeply-clear tones of Ruysdael. The lighter leaves—those puzzlers of the pencil—pervade the air with an untoward spottiness. There is here a work by Mirani—Italian by name, Dutch by birth—of marvellous minuteness of detail. It represents a forest-scene in winter, finished into porcelain glaze, in which each

crack in the old oak bark, each bough with all its minute ramifications, each pebble on the ground, and every weed or blade of rank grass, is depicted with the semblance of perfect fidelity. Such would be the aspect of the place, seen through the finest order of stereoscope; that is, as little French as possible. Again, one finds the strong native characteristic in Muller of Norway's view of a savage mountain-scene—rock, torrent, heather—in his native land, painted with Scandinavian vigour, and with a faithful sense of harmonic tints in all its parts. The catalogue of this Exhibition is rich in landscapes of more than average merit, forwarded from almost every quarter of Europe.

Various as are the component parts of this collection of oil-paintings—close upon 2000 in number—its greatest interest will be found to lie in its department of *genre*. Contrasted subject and contrasted style in it meet the eye on all sides, with much to admire greatly, much to be amused withal. Perhaps the most remarkable of these, taking it for subject and treatment, is a picture by a Dutch artist, Alma-Tadema. It is named “Les Egyptiens de la xviii^e Dynastie,” and represents a supposed scene in one of the old massy and ponderous-pillared palaces of the Pharaohs; namely, two dancing-girls performing their saltatory evolutions, to the music of two harps, before a small court-circle. Unsparing toil seems to have been devoted by the artist to studying the wondrously transmitted evidence of the customs and costumes of the people at the period. The whole is wrought up with a most accomplished vigorous hand, and by its singularity and apparent reality attracts constant and inconvenient crowds. By a strange coincidence, a cabinet picture, with similar subject—illustrating Africa in our own times—viz. that of an Almée girl performing her voluptuous gyrations before a circle of military chiefs,—here represents the genius of M. Gerome; and from its exquisite delicacy and finish of execution—its picturesque composition and the blending into harmony of many contrasted tints—may be taken to be a masterpiece of that artist. Like the other productions of the same studio, for the most part, it is imbued with an especial pruriency; and in this it is contrasted, in a marked manner, with the work of the Dutch artist. It is to be regretted that so fine a faculty as M. Gerome possesses should be combined with a characteristic so thoroughly deleterious. To find a happy contrast to this work, we turn to a most amusing and masterly canvas of a Spanish artist, Bernardo Ferrandiz. It is entitled “The Tribunal of the Waters of Valencia in 1800,” and illustrates a special Spanish custom in that quarter. There are, it appears, seven canals with sluices for conveying the waters of the river Turia throughout the neigh-

bourhood of Valencia, each canal being under the guardianship of a syndic and sluice-man; and it is the custom for the seven syndics to meet, every Thursday, at the door of the cathedral,—then and there to hear any complaint which their sluice-men may have to make against wrongdoers to the canals. Suppose your New-River Company to have such jurisdiction. Well, this picture of Ferrandiz represents these worthy syndics in judgment-seat, all of a row, and hearing the defence of a dangerously-pretty peasant-girl against some charge. The whole scene here is thoroughly Spanish; and while the costume of the syndics is most picturesque in cut and colour, the expression of their physiognomies is full of quiet humour. The whole work is finely artistic, and gives most agreeable evidence, as do other pictures in this Exhibition, of the progress of fine art in the Peninsula.

The "*Lutteurs de Basse-Bretagne*" is very spiritedly depicted by M. Leleux. The scene is on the greensward, within a wood; a circle of spectators is formed, and within it two wrestlers are engaged in their struggle of strength and skill. There is an especial interest in the illustration of this popular custom to the British spectator. We doubt that the cultivation of the manly practice of wrestling is known in any other quarter of France. It has been transmitted from the old mother country, with the unchanging Breton. Here we have it as it still exists in England and Wales, and two such antagonists might have been seen grappling for the Cornish "hug" at old Chalk Farm, hard by Primrose Hill.

There are several views of interiors, with figures, in this Exhibition, quite masterpieces in their way. We should have placed M. Willems of Belgium at the head of the refined class; for his cabinet subjects of "*L'Accouchée*" and "*La Sortie*," but for the rivalry of the French Toulmache, whose "*La Confiance*" and "*Un Lendemain de Bal*," but more especially the former, unite all that is most delicate in composition, in handling, and in expression. It may be doubted that silk was ever more gracefully and with more silvery sheen represented on canvas than on these four. The spirit of Terburg assisted at their creation.

The two small cabinet pictures by G. R. Boulangers are also gems. The one, "*La Cella Frigidaria*," represents a Turkish bath, in which we may suppose a bevy of the Sultan's favourites enjoy the luxury of the ablution. Negro women attend to administer to the performance; and the contrasts of the fairest fair with the black diamond of the sex is thoroughly piquant. The pencilling of this scene and these figures is a perfect union of delicacy and force. A second small picture, from the same hand, represents a few Arab cavaliers on the scout in the Sahara wilderness. The chief, who

occupies the foreground, stands erect in his saddle, and strains to fix his eye on some far-distant object. This is also a gem. When using that very significant term, we should not overlook the charming embodiment of poetry in Hamon's "*Aurora*." This represents the goddess of the morning reaching on tiptoe to the bell-flower of the wild convolvulus, in order to imbibe refreshment from its rim. Showers of dewdrops, in prismatic scintillation, roll down the gossamer drapery of the ever-young divinity, and morning breaks around her in a golden haze. This is poetry indeed, and never has the Neo-grec artist appeared to more advantage. In his second picture, "*L'Imitateur*," the subject is a sorry jest, and the execution is not wholly felicitous. M. Hamon has no follower or imitator in all this crowd of artists.

M. Bellangé has, in the saloon of honour, a large highly-laboured subject of Napoleon welcomed by a crowd of peasants on his road to Paris, after the return from Elba. Notwithstanding much accomplished art herein displayed by the veteran's pencil, there is throughout a sense of heaviness of tone. This is not at all felt in a much smaller picture of his—"Paysans Badois allant passer le dimanche à la ville"—in which a theme of nice humour is as nicely touched off. A copious list of successful artists—successful, albeit not of a *première élite*—will be here found to sustain the class *genre* in a wondrous variety of detail.

F. A. Bonheur, the brother of Rosa, upholds the honours of the name in a vigorous highly-wrought mountain-landscape, with cattle in the foreground. In a large canvas, and group of oxen, by A. Verwee, of Brussels, we find rather his superior, in mellow, masterly colouring, which reminds one of Cuyp. There is, however, a depreciating set-off of tameness in the Flemish composition. The name of Bombedé, of Amsterdam, is honoured by a very small but exquisitely finished picture of horse and dogs, to which the name of Wou-vernans might, without derogation to it, be affixed.

In flower and still-life subjects, Robie, of Brussels, takes the leading place. His picture, the subject being chiefly a vine laden with luscious grapes, is not a mere imitative elaboration, but presents a masterly breadth of effect, which gives it a high-class impress, and reminds us of Van Huysens' best works. It is suspended prominently in the central saloon.

We must now leave behind us, with but a passing glance, a considerable range of light *aquarelle* designs and engravings—with the latter the print-shops of London are doubtless destined to be familiar—invite our readers to breathe, after the saloon atmosphere, the pure air of the large enclosed quadrangle of this *Palais de l'In-*

dustrie, laid out as it is with verdant grass-plots and gravel-walks, wherein the works of the French sculptors are exhibited. What a prodigious advantage the latter have over their brethren on your side of the Channel, in this noble locale—*verdi prati ed ameni luoghi*—where their productions can be seen to the best advantage!

We have seen a much more abundant collection of marbles and casts ranged here than appears on this occasion; a circumstance that may be owing partly to sculptors not being prepared for the new annual exhibition system, and still more satisfactorily to the hands of many of them being wholly engaged on the decoration of public works. Still, we find here several highly interesting works.

The most remarkable of these is, singularly and sadly enough, the masterpiece of a recently deceased sculptor, M. Brian. He was not spared to finish it. It is a rough cast, and is called a Mercury, although with more propriety it might have been designated as a Greek youth—which is all that the seated figure represents. One of the arms has been broken off just below the elbow. Notwithstanding its unfinished condition, so fine is the pervading style of its conception and modelling—so Greek without a trace of plagiarism, or too lively a reminiscence of the antique, that the jury of the department honoured it—not, alas! its creator, with the highest-class gold medal! What will become of it hereafter, is a nice question for solution—whether it be retained as a relic *in statu quo*, or delivered into the hands of some sympathetic professional brother to bring it to completion, and give it to the marble.

Another statue of great beauty, full-size, and cast in bronze, by A. Falguière, and named "*Un Vainqueur au combat de coqs*," represents a graceful youth exultingly bearing off a cock, which is supposed to be the conqueror in a fight; with one hand he clasps it to his side, while the other arm is flung up in the air, and its fingers are snapped in triumph. The grace and buoyant spirit with which the work has been executed seems to justify the "*premier prix de Rome 1859*," which is associated with M. Falguière's name. While we stood scrutinising it, two Italian *gentilhuomini* were also attracted (and they bore the stamp of artists) to its notice, and, after some moments' examination, interchanged a fervid *bello! molto bello!*—and we gave our full concurrence to the verdict.

Apropos of cocks—what subject will not genius elevate?—here, on a pedestal, is a group in bronze of two cocks in the very access of a combat. The spirit and wondrous vigour of the duello is marvellous—each particular feather of the birds starts into erection—not one is lost, and yet there is no littleness in the detail; it is broad and bold—and epic. The author, M. Cain, has further and still more



forcibly illustrated his powers by a sublime figure of a lioness of Sahara, seated and erect, with her whelps in full feeding. The plaster, wherein this is cast, has received a slight tawny tinge; and the Queen of the Desert seems all but to breathe—yet crowds of admirers habitually and recklessly cluster around her!

A statue, fancifully designated "*Jeune Fille à la Source*," by F. Truphème, cannot fail to charm the eye with the sense of its perfect modelling; while the sweet expression of its face, as the head bends gracefully downwards, to mark, as it were, the spouting spring at its feet, gives the whole a character of great completion.

Contrasted with this classic form is a very spirited statuette of a Negro girl—seated in a complex attitude, and playing with a toy. The picturesque symmetry of the work must insure its being transferred to marble, in which the pretty tinted ornaments so discreetly introduced on various parts of the figure will tell to much advantage. It comes from the *atelier* of M. Guillemin.

There are three statues of Napoleon I.'s brothers—Louis, Lucien, and Jerome—prominent amongst the works in this quarter. One alone, that of Lucien, is worth attention, and that is a masterpiece. It represents him in the costume of a Roman senator, with one arm firmly thrust forward from the folds of the robe, as if he addressed the Conscript Fathers; the lofty head—which came nearest into rivalry with that of the imperious brother—is most happily given here, beaming with resolution and intelligence. Looking on it, one feels led to pronounce, "This was the noblest Roman of them all." The sculptor, M. Thomas, in this instance, sustains a reputation already highly known.

The Emperor Napoleon I. has also given work to the statuary on this occasion. He takes the presentment of an equestrian figure—heroic in proportions, and cast in seeming bronze. This appears in front of the Palais de l'Industrie, as companion to a Francis I., both by Clesinger. This statue, in the Roman imperial and military costume, is in all respects a success, which cannot be affirmed of the stiff and, as it were, iron-cased figure of Francis. M. Clesinger is an artist of great vigour and various accomplishment, and he is not contented to appear amongst the sculptors alone, but like M. Angelo, as a painter also. Two small landscapes of his—Roman views—will attract attention in the chief saloon: they are masterly, and executed with a trenchant vigour which bespeaks a hand devoted to the chisel and the mallet.

"But this eternal blazon may not be;" or, in plain prose, your space is too precious for any further prolonged and detailed review of an exhibition sustained by some 3000 works of contrasted art. To

do thorough justice to even a moderate *élite* of these would require a critical disquisition voluminous and vast. We must, then, be content to have conducted your readers, in devious wanderings, through these some dozen picture-graced saloons, generalising, for the most part, in our appreciation; but ever and anon drawing in and dwelling upon special examples, making a select few illustrate the whole; recalling those graphic lines of Tennyson,

“Winding about and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
With here and there a heavy trout,
And here and there a grayling.”

C.

Gulf out of the World.

THE eyes of ordinary mortals will sometimes, as well as those of the poet, cunningly "make pictures when they are shut;" and among the lasting enjoyments which travel—such travel, at least, as is not a head-long steeplechase over a kingdom or a continent—leaves after it, is the vivid impression of scenes the mind's eye receives and retains, and which the imagination conjures up with happy art at will, not so much in the shape of a bundle of facts as in the character of a bright field of vision. Amidst the pictures of this sort with which experience has enriched our private gallery, and which owe their interest more, perhaps, to the force and truth of the representation than to the beauty or strangeness of the objects imaged forth, there is hardly one we entertain ourselves so constantly with as the broad canvas on which the landscape and the life of the Belgian Campine are faithfully sketched from nature. A flat country, "an empty sky, a world of heather," are not in themselves strikingly picturesque, and so guide-books say little or nothing about Flemish *Kempenland*. Danger is scarcely to be apprehended, neither are telling adventures to be hoped for, in traversing this particular tract of the Low Countries; and therefore the few of our wandering islanders who have, for one reason or another, directed their steps thitherward, returning without any inspiring details of "moving accidents by flood and field," serve as solitary examples of enterprise, but do not assume the position of pioneers of an army of invasion marching on that remote region. Remote the Campine certainly is not, if one goes by a matter of miles and latitude. But somehow the Belgians think it so; and, as things are usually measured by proportion, and judged according to prevalent ideas, a foreigner is likely to fall in with the common belief, and to consider the outlying districts of the otherwise populous, cultivated provinces of Antwerp, Limburg, and Brabant, a quite distant, if not wholly inaccessible, part of the kingdom. No doubt, having once left Antwerp or Malines some leagues behind, the wild open waste of marsh and moorland, extending on all sides beyond the border of cultivation which skirts the road and beautifies immeasurable tracts with a fringe of green and gold and fallow brown, powerfully impresses the imagination with a sense of remoteness, and forcibly conduces to a world-forgetting mood. The shifting gray of the long horizon is apt to be taken unconditionally for the incompact veil separating one vast

world of desert from another. Fancy obstinately refuses to entertain the idea that the congregated world is surging up to that line of cloud and morass; and in such circumstances, where is the use of proving in black and white what will not be granted to any argument?

Thus much accomplished, in spite of difficulties, Fancy has to be satisfied. Mere length and breadth are not very rich materials to work on; and so, finding no worthy stage on which to play out a fantastic rôle, Imagination retires with the best grace it can, and leaves the single eye of common sense to discover and enjoy what simple beauty there may be in the diversified surface of the wide-spread plain. Such a landscape none but De Koning or Rembrandt could worthily paint. A pendant to the marvellous landscape in Lord Overstone's collection, the Miller of the Rhine could have painted from the turret of the Chateau de Merode at Westerloo, or from the tower of the fortress-monastery of Tongerlo, or from one of the little sand-mounds on the way from Gheel to Turnhout. It would take this "King of Shadows" himself to make a charming picture of the dark stripes of pine-woods, the wilderness of purple heath, the pretty patches of corn and grass, the flight of quails, the partridge on "whirring wings" above the blossoms, the gleaming marsh, the bare sand, the brown-roofed hamlets up to their knees in broom, the quiet towns, with their unfailing spires, like masted ships far out at sea. Yes; Rembrandt might be trusted to delineate at once the features, and transfuse into the picture the spirit, of the place, and make the canvas radiant, as heaven itself glorifies the scene with the magic procession of cloud-shadows and floods of light soft and golden.

The sportsman can make himself comfortably at home in the Campine. Hares abound, and the mild excitement of fowling can be had in every direction; also the keen appetite, which is the consequence of copious draughts of wild air, almost as exhilarating as "wine alive with sparkles." But the man of the world, though he is supposed to be able to make himself happy any where, would not, we feel assured, content himself long here. If we know the man, he cannot do without other such citizens to keep him company; and in this quarter are to be found only quiet townspeople and rustic peasants, who concern themselves very little with persons and things in countries where furze and broom do not universally abound. For most people the contrast between other places and the scenery and life of the Campine, though apparent, is not violent enough to afford the excitement which, no matter how the fact is disguised, all are in search of when they leave their customary domicile. Almost any

one, after a season's dissipation, or a year's hard work, would rather rush out into the wilderness than put up for a month with dull life in the Campine. Clambering up mountains would be more attractive; and the roar of elemental war amidst crags and torrents and rent precipices would be far more sure of gaining a hearing than the "wind's low stave," to which the standing corn bends and bows, and the heath-blossoms tremble, and the stiff fir-branches rustle harmoniously. The monotony of this lonesome inland region would, to a certainty, be willingly exchanged for the wild sea-coast, the dash of breakers on a frowning headland, or the long roll of crested billows on a level strand. Of all places in the world, therefore, it may safely be inferred the Campine is the last place in which Nature would dream of rearing up a poet; the last, too, in which one ready-reared would be likely to pitch his tent even for the length of a canto, seeing it would not be possible to find throughout its whole extent a reasonable excuse for the indulgence of any "fine frenzy." Every thing around, in the life of the *Campinois*, as well as in the landscape of the strange region, seems reduced to first principles. It would be extremely difficult to be otherwise than commonplace in the midst of such surroundings; for which reason, no doubt, it is that besides the natives, who, in virtue of a certain *grâce d'état*, look upon their own country as the most delightful place to live in, and the best possible to die in, there is another class who do well and flourish in the Campine, and who, having come out into the *bruyère* in search of spiritual help and corporal healing, do often, by the blessing of God, return once more to their home "clothed and in their right mind." From time immemorial the wise folks of Belgium have been used to bring their poor lunatics through the heathy wilderness, and to leave them for solace and healing in the very heart of the Campine.

Gheel, the paradise of fools, as it is called, stands in an oasis of verdure and cultivation, and is about as peaceful and healthy-looking a place as ever we set foot in. Lunatics, we very well knew, formed a considerable section of the population dwelling in the town and nestled in the surrounding hamlets; but, like most people who have never seen the place, our idea of the strange *colonie* was the vaguest, falsest, and most ludicrous that can be conceived. Probably the most distinct notion we formed to ourselves was of a number of huts scattered thickly over the fields, or a long range of structures resembling fever-sheds, or a convict settlement, like that so well known to philanthropists on Lusk Common, near Dublin. The inhabitants of the *commune*, we fancied, must have much the character of the population of a Lunatic Asylum turned out to grass, with a strong and trusty troop of keepers appointed to hold, as much

as might be, the crazy settlers in order. Totally unprepared we therefore were to find a respectable town, with two fine churches, a *Grande Place*, two or three good inns, and a population of 11,000 souls, of whom about 800 are really lunatics. One or two excursions through the town, attendance at divine service in the parish-church of St. Amand and the church of St. Dymphna, the patroness of Gheel, and an extensive round of visits paid to different houses in the town and neighbourhood, under the direction of the excellent Dr. Bulckens, medical superintendent of the new infirmary, readily enabled us to gain a good general idea of both lunatic and rational life in Gheel. The poor *malades* really do live as boarders in the houses of the sane population, are completely domesticated with them, assist in their labours when at all able to do so, share in their amusements, join in their devotions, and, literally, form part of the family of the *nourriciers*, whose hereditary vocation it is to take charge of this afflicted class of human beings. Simpletons and idiots, persons subject to occasional fits of insanity,—such, in fact, as are tolerably manageable,—are lodged with the townspeople, and may be seen in their houses working at different trades, engaged in household duties, or minding the children; or they may be met accompanying the family to church on Sunday, and enjoying an evening promenade through the fields; or be found in other hundred ways filling a place in the common life of reasonable people. Those who are fit to take a turn at field-work—and with most of them agricultural life agrees admirably—are settled in the hamlets clustered in the corn-fields a little outside the town. None are compelled to work; but when disinclined are coaxed and persuaded, and recompensed for every exertion they make. When their labour is really profitable, they are paid for it. Most of the peaceable patients, however, willingly follow the example set them of cheerful toil; they are much more happy when usefully employed; self-respect is preserved, and the rustic freedom they enjoy is in many cases a curative measure in itself far more effectual than the bolts, bars, inevitable gloom, and conscious imprisonment of even the best-regulated asylum. Monomaniacs, who might occasionally prove dangerous neighbours, are placed in houses more remotely situated. There they may be safely isolated, without feeling too irksome a restraint; while a safety-valve is supplied in the free air of the open moorland, to which they can address the wildest ravings of a disordered intellect, without fear of angry rejoinder or useless remonstrance, or the echo being returned of their frantic outbursts.

Lastly, for patients labouring under attacks of dangerous madness, or requiring medical treatment for any serious physical malady,

there is now the Government Infirmary, a handsome building situated near the town, and placed under the superintendence of a distinguished physician, who has devoted himself with great success to the treatment of mental disorders. An efficient medical staff, and a body of subordinate officers, are charged with the inspection and control of the sanitary department of the establishment and the colony in general. Altogether, the *police morale et materielle* seems well attended to in Gheel, since the present happy relations have been established between old customs and principles and new science and organisation. Patients brought to the town pass in the first instance through the infirmary, so that each case comes directly under the observation of the superintendent previous to being settled in one of the families of the neighbourhood. The *malade* is then placed under the care of the physician of the district in which he is lodged, who visits him constantly, prescribes for him when necessary, and reports regularly on his mental and bodily condition. Guards also are appointed to each district, and it is their business to see that no irregularity occurs, and to preserve order and propriety on occasions of unusual excitement, such as fairs, markets, and religious festivals, when the lunatics are generally abroad in considerable numbers. Evidently there is no great danger of serious disturbance, for the majority of the population are in possession of their senses, and all are interested in the good order of the *commune*. When desperately bent on absconding, the insane creatures are lightly fettered; just sufficiently restrained to prevent any attempt at flight, but not so as to hinder them taking ordinary exercise. The difficulties of running away are greatly increased by the peculiarities of the country, which affords no hiding-places for any thing larger than birds; and by the wise regulation whereby the *commune* is fined when one of the lunatics escapes. Considerable numbers are sent to Gheel by the municipalities or parishes on which they have become chargeable, in the same way as paupers in this country may be transferred from the workhouse to an asylum. A great many are placed there by their friends. The entire cost of patients of the poorer class amounts to no more than 10*l.* or 12*l.* per annum; and we can bear witness that they are extremely well lodged, comfortably clothed, and, to all appearance, well fed. Then, for the better class, the price of lodging and maintenance mounts up according to the kind of house they are received into, and the attendance they require. People can be very comfortably settled at an annual cost of 40*l.* or 50*l.*; but if a carriage and horses, a suit of rooms and servants, are wanted, the expense will reach one or two hundred pounds a year. Old and incurable cases are very often sent to Gheel; and no wonder, for it is a happy

home for such poor creatures, who would otherwise be confined for life in some more or less dreary madhouse. This must be taken into account in the return of average cures effected in the colony. Dr. Bulckens is of opinion that eighteen per cent of the general lunatic population are sent home after a time restored to reason. Of curable cases about sixty-six per cent were, during a period of four years, completely recovered.

Thus it will be seen, that healthy active work, domestication in peaceful, orderly family life, separation from other lunatics, and, as may be inferred, removal from painful irritating circumstances and associations, are found excellent means of restoring a disordered mind to a true balance. In a state of society such as we describe, the whims and oddities of *les aliénés* are not much regarded. To be treated as rational is a good means, it would seem, of being forced to become so. Then, again, such simple pleasures as the Belgian people indulge in are freely provided for the patients, who, in this as in other matters, get the full benefit of whatever is going with the general population. Characters undoubtedly eccentric are to be seen in the cafés, reading the *Journal de Bruxelles* or *L'Indépendance Belge*, indulging in mild potations of Diest beer, playing a quiet game of cards; or, on certain gala occasions, are to be found in the height of enjoyment at dancing parties, or contending seriously in public sports. Lastly, the poor souls have all the religious aid which they so greatly need in their affliction. The curé and vicaires have unrestrained access to them, and exercise as strict a surveillance over them in the spiritual as do the government officers in the medical line.* Besides which, they enjoy all the natural advantages of a life in the midst of a simple orderly congregation, in whom habits of piety are firmly established, and who, through tradition and the history of their home and their race, are closely linked with the ages of faith. Undoubtedly there is a halo of sanctity around the spot, proceeding from its close association with the martyrdom and the memory of St. Dymphna. It is a pious faith which has led the friends of the insane, during more than

* The Rev. John O'Hanlon, in a very interesting volume, entitled *The Life of St. Dymphna* (Duffy), says on this subject: "A perfect system of medical and nurse-tending intercommunication is maintained, whilst the local clergy contribute powerfully to assist scientific efforts by bringing calm consolation and devotional feeling into the bosoms of many bereaved but docile creatures. . . . A priest who thoroughly appreciates his exalted mission gives enlightened counsel and consolation to the afflicted; thus effectually aiding any curative treatment adopted by the resident physician. . . . During my visit to the infirmary, in company with two of the local clergymen, this happy concurrence of action was very pleasingly illustrated in more than one instance" (pp. 182, 183).

a thousand years, to bring them to the shrine of St. Dymphna for benediction and healing; it is a feeling of devotion which prompts them still to take the newly-arrived patients to the church of the virgin patroness, whom they believe has many times prevailed with Heaven in behalf of such sufferers, that prayers may be said for them before they are settled in the town; it is a truly Christian gratitude which brings back, year after year, to Gheel many of those who returned cured to their homes, to give thanks to God for the blessing they received, and to attend the novena, processions, and special services with which the Feast of St. Dymphna is celebrated in the town of her patronage. One cannot mingle with the large congregation of townspeople and their demented visitors in St. Amand's without being struck with the immense advantage the patients enjoy in being thus freely associated with the common of the faithful in the house of God; or see the poor *aliénés* muster strongly in the church of St. Dymphna, which they consider especially their own, without reflecting on the moral effect which their assembling thus round the altar, in the character of clients of a martyred virgin, royal, young, and beautiful, must produce on the mind in which a glimmer of reason still survives.* Here, indeed, in this old-world settlement, the excited brain has a fair chance of calming down to the standard of reasonableness. "Puisque l'aliénation doit dans l'immense majorité des cas son origine à nos vices, à nos passions, à nos misères, en un mot à la civilisation, il faut éloigner la victime des lieux qui lui rappellent son malheur." Is not he, the victim, well placed then and safely guarded in the remote Campine, with its advanced guard of pine-woods, its frontier line of marsh, and its magic ring of heather?

Gheel is not one of those institutions that can be reproduced by act of parliament, or closely imitated by any effort of science or philanthropy. It has been the growth of centuries. It owes its origin to the popular veneration for St. Dymphna, who somehow came to be regarded as the special friend among the heavenly host of the insane; and its success, under Providence, may be traced to the extreme felicity of its situation and the peculiar aptitude of its inhabitants for their work, which indeed they seem to look upon in the light of a religious vocation. But as we cannot, much as we might desire it, get up another Gheel here or any where else, is there no resource but to crush our poor maniacs, fools, and simpletons, by the score or the

* We need hardly say that in Gheel, as universally throughout Belgium, perfect liberty of worship prevails. But there are not, or lately were not, more than twenty-one Protestants, Dissenters and Jews, among the lunatic population of the *commune*. See *Rapport sur l'Etablissement d'Aliénés de Gheel*, par M. le Dr. Bulckens, Médecin-inspecteur; Bruxelles, 1861.

hundred, between the stone-walls of great public institutions, or hide them behind the cyclopean gates of lunatic asylums, to be cleverly managed by machinery or scientifically dealt with *en masse*? Certainly a vast deal has been done in our own day, both in these islands and in continental countries, to improve the condition of lunatics, and secure them in public and private establishments a greater degree of that judicious kindly treatment which their sad state requires. Much discussion has been entered into on the subject of plans and variously tested systems. In most instances, however, and indeed we may venture to say in all, whatever improvement has taken place can be traced to the good sense, kind feeling, and great personal devotion, of some one man who has had it in his power to carry out his views in the management of a public or private asylum for the insane. Despite, however, of the strong evidence of outer order, and the absence of unnecessary harshness, to say nothing of actual cruelty, there is often suggested to our mind, in visiting these establishments, that possible skeleton in the closet, the existence of which we always apprehend in institutions for the relief or refuge of misery and suffering, into the management of which do not largely enter voluntary benevolent ministration and avowedly strong religious action. Our ideal of a *maison d'aliénés* would combine the union as much as possible of the freedom and the out-of-door laborious life of Gheel with the security and constant attendance of a well-regulated hospital, and the controlling and administrative direction of a thoroughly enlightened religious community, trained and devoted to this special work. Such an institution, we need not inform our readers, does not exist in philanthropic England or even in Catholic Ireland. But we have seen a very near approach to it in the Hospice St. Julien, at Bruges, and in the branch establishment, under the same direction, at Cortenberg, between Brussels and Louvain.

Some two-and-twenty years ago, Canon Maes, whose time, thought, and fortune, had been devoted to the fostering of the religious establishments of Bruges (those in particular whose main object was the education of the poor), became particularly interested about the state of lunatics in Belgium, and the condition of the houses, both public and private, into which they were received. Having seriously studied the question at issue, and having travelled into other countries to observe the system adopted in the most famous asylums for the insane, Canon Maes became proprietor of St. Julien's, resolved to carry out therein the principles which he had become convinced were the true ones to follow in such an undertaking. The help and co-operation, so greatly needed in commencing and carrying out an enterprise of the kind, were not wanting. In one of the religious

houses of Bruges, a noble-minded woman was found ready to devote herself to the good work, and the carrying out of the Canon's views in the reëstablishment of St. Julien's. A few other members of the community to which this lady belonged likewise volunteered for the hitherto untried work; and in the true spirit of apostleship, if not of martyrdom, left the peace, seclusion, and happy labours of the school, and renounced the companionship of docile youth and healthy minds, for a life of strange trial and inseparable association with disordered minds in every stage of suffering and aberration. St. Julien's had been for more than two hundred years a hospital for the insane; and up to the period at which Canon Maes assumed the direction of the establishment, the old system of cachots, chains, coercion, and terror, had been in full operation. One of the first things done was to liberate the wretched creatures who were fettered and imprisoned; and the good effect was soon observable in the restoration to a far greater degree of reasonableness of some poor sufferers, who, when decently clothed and allowed their liberty, became far happier and much more manageable. A new order of things, in every sense, began. The house, by no means a perfect structure of the kind, became enlarged and improved. The population doubled, and reached in time some four hundred; for the *communes* willingly sent their poor lunatics to this haven of refuge, and families brought their afflicted members from distant parts of the kingdom; and even from foreign countries there were no less than twenty-five patients confided to the Canon's care, before the institution had been two years under his direction. The city of Bruges, though suffering desperately from the almost complete annihilation of its once flourishing trade, and burdened with a pauper population amounting to the well-nigh incredible figure of 20,000 souls, nobly voted a large sum for the erection of additional buildings, and granted a plot of ground necessary for further extension of the plan. St. Julien's is well situated, just within the city boundaries, and close to the ramparts. The buildings, courts, and gardens occupy an enclosure of about seven acres; and not more than a hundred yards distant is a farm of close on fifty acres, cultivated by the patients. Notwithstanding the new erections, and the necessary regularity of the place, St. Julien's has wonderfully little the look of a lunatic asylum. This is due in a great measure to the old-world air of the original structures, which are in the style of the dark-red, gabled, and walled-up edifices so common in ancient Flemish cities; and also, in no small degree, to the busy, lively look of the place, when, as we last saw it, the men were occupied in various ways about the new buildings, under the Canon's active superintendence, and a number of the women were sitting in groups, knitting or sewing, in the garden,

or were gathered round the nuns, busily cutting vegetables in true continental style, for the rather numerous dinner-party of St. Julien's.

No one could see the poor in this establishment without concluding that it must be a very paradise for them. There is a certain open day—perhaps there are days—in the month, when the friends and relatives of the patients come to see them; and then indeed great are the rejoicings over coffee and bon-bons, and news and friendly faces. Also there are special days in the year when there is a feast in the *quartiers*, and other days when the good folks are taken out on an excursion to some of the villages in the environs of the city. And then add to all this the healthy excitement of work, the cordial attentions of the Canon, and the affectionate ministration of the good Sisters. The poor, however, it was ruled by Providence, were not to enjoy a monopoly of these advantages. The rich came to claim a share of the nuns' devotion, and to profit by the Canon's immense experience: they were not turned from the door. St. Julien's not being laid out for the accommodation of a large class of such patients, they are usually, after a short stay, sent on to either of the branch establishments—St. Anne's near Courtray, or St. Joseph's at Cortenberg. The latter house is excellently situated midway between two cities, and in a fine open part of the country. Here, though the great majority are patients of the poorer order, there is a division set apart, and comfortable accommodation provided, for a much higher class. About twelve years ago removed thither from Bruges a large number of poor patients, some *malades* of rank, and a detachment of the St. Julien's community, which even then included a few English and Irish Sisters. Before long the new institution took a strange development. The relatives of a patient who had been brought from a foreign country, not wishing to be separated from the object of their solicitude, proposed to remain as boarders under the same roof; and arrangements were entered into enabling them to do so. By and by, other cases of the same kind occurred; and ladies who liked the society of the Sisters, or the holy quiet of the place, or the idea of being in a manner domesticated in a convent without any restriction of liberty, or who, for one reason or another, found it an advantage to live in retirement for a while, came to stay in the establishment; till gradually an ingredient of sanity, so to speak, leavened the society of the place, to the great advantage of the better class of patients, who derived immense solace and support from the sane companionship they had thought themselves doomed to be deprived of. The religious character of the house, and the spirit of charity which abode there, made that possible and advantageous, which in other circum-

stances would have been difficult, and probably conducive to disorder. There too, just as at Gheel, the house of God was the centre in which were united the various elements of that strange society. The corridor on which the apartments of many of the lady residents opened led directly to the little chapel; and all times of the day its sanctuary was open alike for the nuns, the patients, and the *pensionnaires*. It was quite touching, we thought, when the bell rang betimes in the morning, and the director and his clerk appeared, and the Sisters, and the residents, and the patients, and the visitors, came forth from all parts of the house to attend Mass in the pretty chapel of St. Joseph's. Even the poor *aliénés* derived advantage from the presence of the *pensionnaires*, for they used sometimes to go down to the *quartiers*, and see them at work in the laundry and kitchen, and procure little feasts for them, and join in the excursions from time to time arranged for their amusement to places of interest in the neighbourhood. It may also be mentioned that ladies who entered the house as patients not unfrequently remained in its shelter much longer than was at all necessary. The real seclusion and yet absolute freedom of the place was in itself comforting after a season of trial; and as they could enjoy the company of perfectly rational people, there existed no necessity to hurry away to the noise and tumult of the great world.

In the government of the house there is between the Sisters and the patients no intermediate class whatever; not a single hired nurse, warder, or servant. The only help the nuns have is such as can be afforded by the most rational of the *malades*, who are the only servants employed in any part of the building. What heroic abnegation there is in the life of this community! Their very dress shows what they must be prepared for: no sweeping train, no long veil; but close-fitting head-gear, and a habit made of strong fine cloth; for, as we were laconically informed, any thing else would soon be in ribbons! The retirement and peace of the cloister is not for them. They have no cells; they sleep in the common dormitories with the poor, or in the private rooms of the better class of patients who require particular attendance; and their troublesome charge, we are told, think very little of getting up in the night to have a talk with the Sisters, or perhaps to scold and threaten them. Nothing short of angelic patience and absolute heroism could get them through their day's work, so often are their exertions of no use, or their hardly-accomplished achievements perversely undone. We can never forget the scene we witnessed, of one of the nuns endeavouring to persuade a miserable creature to eat; the hopeless inanity of the one figure, and the sweet perseverance of the other, were indeed calculated to make a deep impression. Then the maniacs abuse and insult their kind guardians;

but, as one of the good Sisters said in her simplicity, "It is easy to bear it all, when one thinks of how the Jews spat on the face of our Lord." They are absolutely without fear. One young Sister, to our own knowledge, took charge, on one occasion, of four lunatics, one at least unmistakably dangerous, and brought the party five hundred miles by sea and land safe and sound to Bruges. In the quarter at Cortenberg, where the "furious" are confined, we found one nun, occasionally assisted by another, in charge of as desperate-looking a troop of maniacs as ever we laid eyes on. To be sure there is this security, that mad people do not combine; and if one were to attack the person in charge, the chances are that the others, who would be sure to look on the aggressor as a "lunatic," would come to the rescue. Naturally the influence of religious over the insane is very great, owing to their indomitable patience and that tenderness of regard which their exceeding charity makes them ingenious in manifesting to the troublesome and the afflicted. In experience, too, they have the advantage over the staff of an ordinary asylum, seeing that they spend their whole life in the institution. Lunatics are naturally suspicious; and in houses under lay management they are always thinking that people are deceiving and cheating them, and leaguings with their supposed enemies, who, for their own private interest, and to make use of their money, shut them up. But in houses managed by a religious community, who do not work for hire, and who have taken a vow of poverty, such suspicions do not enter their heads, and consequently they are far better disposed to respect those who care for and restrain them. In another respect, too, a religious body have great advantage. Insane people complain grievously of loss of liberty; a cause of discontent greatly aggravated when they see those who have charge of them going abroad and otherwise amusing themselves. The nuns can say: "We are just as much imprisoned as you are; we have given up our liberty, preferring to stay here all our life to mind you." Such considerations as these brought before patients who complain of being imprisoned are very decisive, often make a deep and salutary impression, comfort and console them. Moreover, the nuns are living examples of patience, obedience, and self-denial; and they both live and die in the midst of them. When Sister Philomena's task was done, she lay like a dead saint in St. Joseph's, with her vows and her crucifix in her hands; and when they took her to the peaceful resting-place, in the shadow of the village-church, the Canon and the director and the nuns followed, and so did some of the poor *malades*, and the *pensionnaires* joined and held the pall as the sad procession took its way across the fields.

The religious consolation which the directors and nuns have it in

their power to administer to the afflicted in these establishments need not be dwelt on at length. Their great experience enables them to perceive when severe attacks of mania are coming on, and their knowledge of character helps them to give the sufferer—often scared at the approach of those fits—the support and comfort so sadly needed. In these circumstances confession is often made, and the Holy Communion received; the Viaticum, as it were, of the dolorous way through which the stricken spirit has to pass. The crisis over, the faithful ministers are on the watch to usher in once more the dawn of reason; and again the strengthening sacraments are at hand; this time in the character, so to speak, of a fresh baptism into a new life. The succours of religion are at such moments inexpressibly precious. In the one case, the failing mind—not for that “exiled from the eternal providence”—is brought patiently to accept the inevitable trial, and take as a cross the painful entrance into the dark night of unknown terrors closing round it; in the other, the released spirit is upheld, taught not to brood over the chaos of the past, but led courageously to meet the future, and earnestly work while it is yet day. Again, in cases of incurable madness, a lucid interval very frequently supervenes before death. It is remarkable that it is not always at the last moment that this occurs, but sometimes four, six, or even fifteen days before death. Often, too, this lucid interval is not of long duration; sometimes it lasts a day, sometimes not so long. The bodily strength growing exhausted, there comes a moment in which the mind resumes its empire, and the darkened intellect once more becomes enlightened. At such moments the patient can well receive the last sacraments. But the physical power presently sinking to a still lower level, the poor mind, which has need of an instrument through which to act, is forcibly drawn down with it, and death at last ensues. These are the moments for which the Sisters watch and wait, for days, and months, and years; these are the moments in which not only the wayworn spirit, awaking from its long trance, receives inexpressible consolation and the earnest of a new life, in which “the former things shall not be held in recollection, and they shall not come upon the heart;” but likewise these are the moments in which the angels of mercy, visibly standing by the death-bed, receive in their greatest earthly recompense a foretaste of the everlasting reward.

If we were a homely *Campinois*, and things went wrong with us, we might say: “Should sense fail and reason totter, take us to St. Dymphna’s shrine, and lay us there in the wild moor, and with the simple peasant folk.” But being as we are, the growth of a not altogether wise civilisation, we should rather say: “If the Lord deal

heavily with us for our own or our fathers' sins, or 'that the works of God shall be made manifest,' shut us not up in one of your great asylums—models though they be—for 'sans la charité, nous ne disons par la philanthropie, il est impossible de vivifier aucune institution humaine ;'* but bring us to St. Julien's, and set us down in the shadow of the Apostles ; and let us live, or, if it be God's will, die, in the company of those ministering angels in whom His grace dwells so manifestly."

* *Considérations sur les Maisons d'Aliénés en Belgique*, par le Chanoine P. J. Maes, p. 9; Bruges, 1845.

Violet's Freak.

CHAPTER I.

"O SUMMER NIGHT!"

ON a certain fair night, one May, not many years ago, the fine old mansion of Summerfield Hall slept grandly under the stars. The moon, gazing at it from behind a dun bank of trees in the distance, had tenderly overspread it with a coverlet of silver, to save its brawny shoulders from the dew. Every leaf of its ivy was pointed with a diamond, and the great hall-door was supported by two pillars of light. It looked like a palace of peace. Alack-a-day, that any restless head should be pillowed underneath its tranquil roof!

Mrs. Dorothea de Coverley, spinster, could not sleep. She shut her eyes, and composed herself; opened them again, and discomposed herself. She counted the handles on her wardrobe, visible in the moonlight, at the other end of the room, sighed, and noticed that the curtain-rings of her bed were unequally divided. Poor Aunt Dorothea, she was sadly restless! What could it all be about?

She was a middle-aged lady, who, as far as any ordinary observer could discern, should have had no earthly shadow of care on her serene mind. Eminently sensible and amiable, and having the honour to be the sister of the late Sir Jasper de Coverley (lineal descendant of the celebrated Sir Roger); having also the happiness to be the beloved guardian of her brother's only daughter, a pretty and accomplished young lady, just returned from school,—what could there be to disturb her thus, and make her so terribly restless upon her nocturnal couch? Ah! just there we have hit upon Aunt Dorothy's secret. It was precisely because she was the guardian of the heiress of Summerfield Hall that she could not sleep.

Violet de Coverley, aged eighteen, was the cause of her uneasiness. "Susan Dorothea Violet," the young lady had been named; but a council of schoolfellows having set upon the question of whether or not Tennyson might, could, or should, ever be induced to write an ode to a Susan or a Dorothy, and having unanimously decided in the negative, the two first homely baptisms had been laid aside. Violet de Coverley, then, was the cause of her aunt's present disturbed state of mind.

It was not because her niece was stupid, nor ugly, nor yet cold-hearted, nor even extravagant,—though she did insist upon wearing

her silk dresses flowing a yard upon the ground, which made them come a great deal more expensive than was necessary;—it was not this that made Mrs. Dorothea groan upon her pillow. It was not because the young damsel preferred to wear a broad-leaved white hat with a lackadaisical bunch of flowers in the front, instead of the tasteful blue sunshade which the thoughtful aunt had taken pleasure in contriving for her with her own dexterous fingers. It was not even because she disliked grave reading and needlework. It was none of all this.

Mrs. Dorothea de Coverley counted the handles of her wardrobe again and again, suspending her thought, as it were, upon the friendly nobs. "One, two, three,—that poor absurd child!—three, two, one! I wonder if shower-baths would be of any service? Two, one, three! I must take some decided step; but in what direction? Oh, dear me! it is the most perplexing case I ever knew." Arriving at this decision, Aunt Dorothy groaned. "I wonder whether Sarah Singleheart will be able to assist me when she comes to-morrow. She has had so many girls of her own to manage, surely she will be able to advise me what to do. Oh, that I could get one comfortable night's rest, such as I used to have before this dear tormenting girl came home from school! But if I sleep now, I dream of Violet in the midst of some terrible mischief, and waken up in a fright. Last night, I thought I saw her dressed like Ophelia, walking down to the river to drown herself; and the night before, she flashed before me in a scarlet riding-habit, galloping after the hounds with that odious young Canterdale. And now, to-night—but, gracious Heaven! what noise is that?"

Mistress Dorothea sat bolt upright in her bed, and gazed around her dimly-lighted chamber. It was a handsome room, handsomely appointed. Two wide windows draped with airy curtains admitted the moonlight, which fell upon the floor in broad bright chequers. Pretty things here and there glimmered in the silvery shine and half asserted themselves. The light gushed with slanting ray over half the dressing-table, changing the good spinster's substantial ornaments into fairy trinkets. A watch hung there on its stand, ticking faithfully. Three full minutes it ticked off, while startled Mrs. Dorothea sat bolt upright and staring, transfixed with terror in her bed. For it was past midnight, and the house was sleeping; and she had heard a noise, a dreadful, a fearful, a most alarming noise.

She got up, and attired in her dressing-gown and nightcap threw open one of the windows and listened. There lay the silvered lawn and the stirless trees with their soft spreading shadows. Here glinted a little winding river; and there shone the blanched gable of

a slumbering homestead. Over far in the distance a troop of sleeping clouds nestled in the uncertain undulations of dark wooded hills. A sweet and tranquil vision of the earth lay beneath the eyes of Mrs. Dorothea de Coverley, and a thousand fragrant scents came rushing from east and west to make the air she inhaled delicious. But the worthy lady only stared, as though Macbeth's haunting dagger flashed through the midnight air before her terrified gaze; and gasped as if the rich May odours from the neighbouring garden had carried some subtle poison into her lungs. But it was not through eye or nostril that the soul within her was assailed by fear. With parted lips and distended eyes Mrs. Dorothea leaned from her window and listened. She listened to a dreadful sound that smote upon her ear like the sudden tolling of an alarm. She grew white; she shivered; she grasped the window-sill; and finally sank into a neighbouring seat overcome with despair. For that noise, that dreadful sound that she had heard, it was, it was—the twang of a guitar.

Of all the various forms and phases which heroism assumes, there is none more sublime than that displayed by the lonely woman; who in a moment of horror, such as must curdle the blood, struggles to forget her own natural weakness, and succeeds in judging calmly and acting promptly. After a moment of feminine dismay Mrs. Dorothea became a heroine. She steeled her nerves; she smoothed her features; she stood erect and listened again. And, ah! yes, there it came once more, wafted on the moonlit air; mingled with the breath of the roses and lilacs; sinking and swelling softly like the subdued lights and shadows of the hour; sighing round the angle of the house, and transforming the sensible old building and grounds of Summerfield Hall into paradise, or a scene in a play. Hark!

“O sa-ummer na-ight!
 (Tum tum! tum tum!)
 So-o softly bra-ight
 (Tum tum! tum tum!);
 How swee-et the bower
 (Tum tum! tum tum!)
 Where sleeps thy cra-adled flower!
 (Tum tum! tum tum! tum tum! tum tum!)”

Mistress de Coverley had steeled her soul, and she listened to this without flinching.

“Ridiculous! insufferable! intolerable stage-trickery!” she ejaculated; “and what a disastrously fine voice the audacious creature has got! Ah, Mr. Augustus Canterdale, and so you intend to sing away the fences that separate the goodly acres of Summerfield from your own impoverished estate. Upon my word, I admire your in-

genuity and perseverance. Poetry and hot-house flowers and accidental meetings were not enough, and therefore you have turned troubadour! You leave no means unthought of by which you may captivate the fancy of a silly school-girl. Ah, Violet, Violet! my poor little ignorant nursling! how nicely into the wilderness your own romantic folly and the schemes of a mercenary youth are leading you! But patience, Mr. Troubadour; sing your serenades, and lay your plans, and laugh at your successes! Mark my words, though, this sweet 'summer night;' for I vow that, harmless as you think her to be, simple Aunt Dorothy will yet find means to outwit your cleverness, and to save her silly child from your clutches!"

Having framed this sturdy resolve, Aunt Dorothea closed the window; and providing herself with no better light than the moon-shine afforded her, quitted the room. She threaded stairways and passages till she came to a large landing, where the moonlight poured through a tall stained window, and flooded over the carpet. Here she paused before a door, and without the ceremony of knocking, opened it.

O shade of the great author of *Romeo and Juliet*! did ever summer moon shine upon a more blissful scene than that which at this moment greets the expectant eye of Mrs. Dorothea de Coverley? A balcony covered with clustering flowers, seen through a French window draped in lace, like a tall bride; a table covered with poetry-books in fine bindings, an extinguished lamp, a desk, and a vase of roses; and, though last not least, the slim figure of a young lady standing in the centre of the room in an attitude of rapt attention, her white robe sweeping the ground, and her long hair floating to her waist. Her eyes have been cast up to the ceiling, her hands clasped upon her breast, in the ecstasy of listening to that delicious "tum tum! tum tum!" which keeps twanging up to her window. But—the door opens, and Aunt Dorothea appears.

It was too bad: Violet de Coverley thought it was really too bad. It was always the same. So soon as ever she contrived to get herself fairly transported to the delightful seventh heaven of romance, so surely did Aunt Dorothy come and drag her down again, wrapping her up in a dismal wet blanket of a sermon about folly and imprudence and catching cold. Now, to-night it was just the same old story. This was her first serenade, and here it was fairly spoiled. But no: stay! A discovery, a persecution of this kind, was surely more romantic than if all had gone smoothly. Aunt Dorothy would reproach her, and forbid Augustus the house; she, Violet, would be awake all night, and go down to breakfast in the morning with eyes red with weeping. Ecstatic!

As these thoughts flashed through her mind, Miss de Coverley refrained from looking cross and foolish, as she had been on the point of doing; shrank backward with the air of a tragedy-queen, raised her hand and dragged the hair from her forehead with a distracted gesture, and then stood motionless, in the attitude of a martyr waiting for the blow.

"Violet," said Mrs. Dorothea, in a querulous tone,—“Violet, I wonder how you can be so foolish as to encourage open-air musicians to come playing about the house at this absurd hour of the night. Why have you not thrown the fellow some money and bade him begone?”

At this unexpected speech Violet stood aghast. Her hand fell from her hair: there was an end of attitudinising, for she was seriously dismayed. Had Aunt Dorothy really made this mistake? Did she suspect nothing but that the house had been disturbed by the performance of an unfortunate strolling musician? How, then, undeceive her? Violet stood crestfallen, and had not courage to say, “Oh, aunt, it is only Augustus Canterdale singing me a serenade!” She hung her head, and said nothing.

“It was very thoughtless of you, my love,” Mrs. Dorothy went on; “very thoughtless on account of other people, even if your own good taste could endure to hear that pretty song murdered as the wretch has been murdering it for the last ten minutes. But perhaps the poor creature is hungry, and you should have thought of that too. We will give him something to buy his breakfast with, at any rate.”

And so saying, before Violet had time to stay her, Mrs. Dorothea had opened the window and flung something wrapped in white paper from the balcony. Violet leaped up with a shriek, and Mrs. Dorothea looked down to see the eager musician plunge into a thicket of leaves in search of what seemed a precious missive. He snatched—opened the paper, and discovered—a penny! His strains were heard no more that night.

“And now, my dear,” said Mrs. de Coverley, while she held some sal-volatile to the nostrils of her almost fainting niece, “you must try and get a good night’s rest, and I will take care that you are not disturbed in this manner again. Tiger shall be unchained at night for the future, and I will venture to say our musical friend will not repeat his visit.”

After her aunt had tucked her in and departed, Violet sobbed aloud with mortification: “Oh, oh, oh!” she gasped; “was ever any thing so provoking? (*Sob.*) Just when every thing was going on so beautifully, and I was beginning to feel so like Juliet! (*Sob.*) I had rather Aunt Dorothy had scolded me to death!” (*Sob, sob, sob.*)

CHAPTER II.

AUNT DOROTHY'S PERPLEXITY.

NEXT morning both the ladies of Summerfield Hall were in bad humour. Violet de Coverley was pettish with her maid, and pouted at the sunshine as she stood at the window having her sash tied, and looking out on the garden below, where last night so fair a blossoming of romance had been nipped in the bud. As she stands so, we will sketch her. She is certainly a very pretty girl; being an heiress, she will be called beautiful. She has neat saucy little features; eyes to match her name, and a profusion of warm brown hair. The greatest beauty of her face is her fresh, delicate pink-and-white complexion. If trying to find fault, one might object to the extreme lowness of her forehead. This, however, when her hair is, as now, combed up in front, in the style of the old French pictures, strikes one as only an attractive peculiarity. If the same brown tresses were worn brushed straight across her brows, in a fashion most becoming to many, this unusual lowness of the forehead must proclaim itself a deformity at once, cutting off the top of the head, and throwing the lower features out of proportion. This little personal oddity of Miss de Coverley's, though seemingly a trifle, must not be lost sight of by the readers of this notable history.

Up to the age of fourteen Violet had been educated at home, under the superintendence of her aunt. Before her departure from Summerfield for a year at school, she had been chiefly remarkable for her merry temper and frank unaffected manners. Upon her return, however, all this had changed. She had grown too ethereal for simple uninteresting happiness. Smiles were commonplace, and laughing was essentially vulgar. She walked with a stately step, and carried her throat like a swan. She read poetry by moonlight. Her robust health annoyed her. To feel hungry put her out of temper. Upon a day that she chanced to look unusually pale, she experienced rapture. Riding, which had once been her favourite exercise, was now rude and unpoetic, unless one could carry a hawk on one's wrist, and be costumed like the ladies in Wouvermans' pictures. Her dressmaker was driven frantic by her incessant demand for picturesque draperies. She was always designing some extraordinary bodice or vest, or wanting some whimsical sleeve copied from an old picture; and the consequence was that, as she swept about the lawns and drawing-rooms of Summerfield, in her silks and velvets of fantastic cut, and with her hair dressed in her own quaint picturesque fashion, she was more like a vivid realisation of the

heroine of some poetic legend than an ordinary young lady of the nineteenth century. She would have given half her substantial possessions for a genuine robe of "samite without price,"

"In colour like the satin-shining palm
On fallows in the windy gleams of March;"

though I am not at all sure that that exceedingly peculiar hue would have particularly suited her complexion. To glide by moonlight through perpetual gardens of lilies, attired in gossamer garments, and to feel like a nymph, or a peri, or an angel, was just at this present period of her life Miss de Coverley's beau-ideal of a delicious state of existence. Whether this state of feeling was doomed to be strengthened or weakened by time, we are about to show. What her Aunt Dorothy thought of it we will allow that good lady to declare in her own words.

For Mrs. Dorothea de Coverley had taken a decided step, and the consequence was that even now, while her niece sulked in the sun over last night's unlucky contretemps, the anxious guardian was eagerly looking out for the arrival of a friend in need. Sleepless nights and thoughtful days had failed to discover to her any desirable course to pursue. Frowns and sighs and wise saws had seemed to produce no effect on the delinquent. Aunt Dorothy had laboured during six months to convert the young heiress to more sensible ways, and daily she groaned to find that things were only growing worse. Night after night she counted the handles of her wardrobe; morning after morning her buttered toast was carried away untasted. Her favourite pudding was unappreciated at dinner; she cut out the charity-children's pinafores the wrong way of the cloth, and put the string-case at the bottom instead of the top; and yet the heart of the ungrateful Violet was no way touched.

This state of things had been going on, as we have said, for six months, ever since Violet's return from school. Ten days ago a crisis had arrived. After a showery spring, summer had all at once burst upon the world, and crowned it with a bewildering glory.

May had suddenly transformed Summerfield into the land of poesie for Violet. Within doors she was constantly reminded of the dreadfully material state of things in the midst of which she was obliged to dwell. But now, in this splendid weather, she could spend hours with her poets under the trees, or wander to the river-side, and forget the uncongenial world while listening entranced to the warbling of the nightingales; and so things had come to a frightful crisis. Nature had cruelly declared herself on Miss de Coverley's side, and commenced hostilities against Miss de Coverley's distracted guardian. The sun shone upon the young lady, the buds

opened for her, the patriarchal trees waved their paternal benedictions over her wilful head, as she passed pensively beneath them, trailing her rich silk dresses over the dewy grass, to the serious detriment of the trimming on the hem, and the speechless dismay of Aunt Dorothy. And then there was the moon coming forth every night in unheard-of splendour, and doing more mischief at one shining than could possibly be accomplished in the odorous sunlight of three glowing days. Nor was even this all; for just at that point when Aunt Dorothy conceived that the measure of her perplexity was well nigh filled up to the brim, an unexpected inpouring of fresh bitters had suddenly set it overflowing at her lips. Inexorable Fate had flung a hero, a real living hero, upon his knees at the feet of the romantic Violet.

On this particular morning, as we have said, neither of the ladies of Summerfield was in a serene frame of mind. Violet moped about the grounds all the morning, sulking because of last night, and the spoiling of her serenade, while Aunt Dorothea tried a hundred occupations, and failed to persevere in any of them. She took her scissors and basket in hand, and tried to do a little gardening; but, finding that her nervous fingers were snipping off buds instead of rotting leaves, she gave up that employment as unsafe. She sat in the summer-house with her netting, but she made so many knots on her thread that her work got into a mess. She even ventured to turn over some pages of Miss de Coverley's novels, in order to beguile the time; but all the heroines were "Violet," and all the villains were named "Canterdale;" and this was tiresome, and so she gave them up. A dozen times she had looked at her watch; thrice she had walked half-way down the avenue and back again. At last, to her intense relief, the sight of a carriage rewarded her anxious eyes, and her friend Mrs. Singleheart arrived.

Mrs. Sarah Singleheart was the wife of a doctor, residing about fifty miles from Summerfield. She and Aunt Dorothy had been schoolfellows, and had kept up an unfading friendship ever since their fifteenth year. They corresponded frequently, and visited one another as often as circumstances would permit. Mrs. Singleheart was the mother of a large family, amongst whom were many girls. Two of these were married, and the rest were well-behaved, amiable young spinsters. It was not therefore wonderful that anxious Aunt Dorothy should look towards this experienced matron for help in her present dreadful difficulty. She had written, hinting at her dilemma, and her devoted Sarah had at once flown on the wings of friendship to her assistance.

In her younger, unaffected days Violet de Coverley had been a

favourite with Mrs. Singleheart, and it vexed the good matron no little to hear that the girl had been spoiled. She remembered her happy, truthful disposition, and was fain to believe that nothing very serious was the matter. "Poor Dorothea is inexperienced," she thought, as she progressed over the fifty miles towards Summerfield. "Her own life until now has been too much like a holiday. Ah! if she had had to manage five hundred a year, and to rear and educate ten boys and girls as I have done, she would not be so fidgety about trifles!"

Violet appeared at dinner, and Mrs. Singleheart thought she had grown to be a very pretty creature. True, she was rather rapt-away and lackadaisical-looking, and she did not eat; but then she was just at the poetry-reading age, and wanted to see a little more of the everyday life of the world. "Ah! if I had her at home," thought the thrifty matron, as she sipped her soup, "I'd set her to help Lucy to teach the children and darn the stockings; and a month of that would be better for her than a whole year of sermonising!" As for Aunt Dorothea, the vision of her friend's sensible motherly face at the opposite end of the table quite reassured her already. She felt her truant appetite return, and actually enjoyed her dinner.

CHAPTER III.

MRS. SARAH SINGLEHEART'S ADVICE.

"AND NOW, Dorothy, what is all this about Violet?"

Mrs. Singleheart sank into one of the drawing-room couches as she spoke, and filled it to overflowing with her comfortable person and her ample skirts. She had a handsome face, and wore a dignified cap, and that most becoming addition to a matronly toilet, viz. an elegant shawl. Her manner had an air of business-like attention, and there was an expression of sympathy in the folding of her white, firm, pink-tinted hands. Aunt Dorothy sat opposite to her with a disturbed countenance.

The two friends were alone. From the open window they could see Violet walking up and down the garden-paths in the sunset, with a rose in her belt and her eyes on a page of Tennyson. Her pretty brown curls fluttered on her shoulders, and the white lilies brushed her gown, and the laburnums kissed her shoulder as she passed. The rosy sky made a background for her light figure, and the trees stooped and framed her. The young lady's eyes were upon her book, but she could see through that open window of the drawing-room, in spite of the witchery of "Faintly smiling Adeline." All day she had been in low spirits about the vulgar ending of last night's adventure.

Now, seeing her two respected elders in close conversation together, with that wise, mysterious, solicitous expression on their faces which the countenances of kind mammas and aunts do assume when they are holding council over the follies or besetting dangers of their cherished girls; seeing this so soon after dinner, Violet guessed at once what was the object of Mrs. Singleheart's visit, and knew that the subject of the present conversation was herself. She felt persecuted directly, and her spirits rose several degrees.

This was really most consoling. It almost made atonement for the ignominious throwing of the penny last night. Sentimentalism will thrive in adversity; but a blast of ridicule, if it does not kill it with one breath, will at least drive it into the agonies of death at once. From the torments of these agonies, this fresh little evidence of persecution rescued Violet's thrilling romance. It administered to her wounds the healing balsam of importance. The young lady sighed profoundly, and felt elated. She turned over a page of her book, and tried not to wish that she had eaten her dinner, instead of through "sickness of soul," leaving the table with her natural desires unsatisfied. Hunger and Tennyson do not agree well together. "Mystery of mysteries, faintly smiling Adeline!" Fly away, gross idea of roast-chicken and cherry-tart despised. Must it be owned that a latent hope lingered in a corner of Miss de Coverley's heart—to wit, that dear good old Knox the housekeeper might, unprompted, conceive the brilliant idea of sending up some of her nice fresh shortbreads for tea?

"And now, Dorothea, what is all this about Violet? Nothing serious, I hope. I fear you are too anxious, and expect too much from a young thing just fresh from school. I daresay she is a little too fond of poetry; but that will wear away. The world is new to her just now; and she hasn't learned proper names yet, and mistakes one thing for another. By and by she will get accustomed to life. For my part, I think her a charming little creature. If I were a young man, instead of an old lady, I should be tempted to fall in love with her, in spite of dear Summerfield and her few nice thousands. I think you have no right to be dissatisfied."

Aunt Dorothy groaned. "Ah, Sarah," she said, "you have just hit the mark at random. A young man has fallen in love with her."

"My poor old friend!—why, how very dreadful!" said Mrs. Singleheart, with an amused smile at the despairing tone of this announcement.

"Don't laugh, Sarah, till you have heard all," said Aunt Dorothea, pettishly. "I am not so foolish as to be in trouble because a

pretty girl must be admired. But I am disturbed and anxious because a designing creature—a person whom I believe to be thoroughly insincere—is playing a game with my poor dear silly child against me. The stake that he plays for is Summerfield and those thousands you have mentioned. Violet, poor little goose, never dreams of a stake at all; but is simply enchanted with the novelty and excitement of the game. As for me, their opponent, I play for my child's future welfare and happiness. They have given me check upon check; for he is a clever young villain, and she is absurdly unmanageable. If I am checkmated in the end, the girl had better be dead."

Mrs. Singleheart looked sufficiently serious now. "I beg your pardon, Dorothy," she said; "this is a grave matter, indeed. And who is this very troublesome young man?"

"Young Canterdale, of Brushwood Park, our nearest neighbour. His father was once the owner of a fine estate; but has been living on the brink of ruin for the last twenty years. The elder Canterdale is a stupid man; but the son is clever, and thinks to amend his fortunes by marriage. I believe he had marked Violet for his prey before her return from school. There was a sort of playmate acquaintance between them when they were children, and the young man has made a great deal out of this little fact. The manner in which he introduced himself to her was most artfully contrived. Violet was walking out one evening, with her head, of course, filled with the catastrophes of the last new novel she had been reading. Just at that part of the Summerfield grounds where they are adjoined by those of Brushwood Park, a large dog sprang out of the bushes, and began barking at her in a most violent manner. The silly girl was nearly frightened to death, and imagined herself on the point of fainting, when a gallant defender rushed from among the trees in the person of Mr. Augustus Canterdale. He brought her home, and the next day he called to assure himself that Miss de Coverley had not been mortally injured by the unfortunate barking of his dog. And he called again, and he called again; and I've never been able to shake him off since. For the most hopeless part of the matter is this—that Mr. Augustus Canterdale won't be snubbed."

"But are you sure he intends to make love to her, Dorothy?"

"Sure! Why, it is the most barefaced thing you can imagine! He cuts her name all over the trees; he has taken lessons on the guitar, expressly for the purpose of serenading her; he sends a carrier-pigeon, perpetually hovering about her window, with copies of romantic verses under its wing. I live in daily terror of the silly

little thing's coming to tell me that she has engaged herself to marry the wretch."

Aunt Dorothea paused and sighed profoundly. Mrs. Singleheart was silent, and tapped the carpet thoughtfully with her toe. At last she said:

"And you are quite convinced, Dorothy, of these two facts,—that the young man is unworthy, and that Violet's heart is not seriously engaged in the affair? Because, as you know of old, I am not a great advocate of worldly matches; and, unless there is some serious reason against it, I think it best, in general, to let young people have their own way in these matters."

"Ah! Sarah," said Aunt Dorothea, plaintively, "that would be very well, indeed, if those points were the only two matters we had got to consider. But, unfortunately, I have not told you every thing yet. The rest is an old story, though it will be new to you."

Aunt Dorothy buried her face in her pocket-handkerchief. Presently she recovered herself, and continued:

"You think, of course, with all the world, that Violet is the heiress of considerable wealth. And so she is—conditionally. Her father, for many years before his death, was not, as he was believed to be, a very rich and unembarrassed man. Poor Jasper had a mania for speculation, and he lost largely during the later years of his life. Our other brother, Andrew, who amassed money in India, was in reality the wealthy man of the family. From him Jasper borrowed immensely, keeping the knowledge of his difficulties from the world. The two brothers, unhappily, quarrelled over their money transactions, and lived estranged for years. On his deathbed, poor Jasper had really only a tithe to bequeath to his daughter of all that appeared to be his. Then Andrew came to his side, and said: 'Let us forgive one another. Don't be unhappy about the child; I will leave her all I possess.' And poor Jasper died at peace."

"Andrew lived only a year after this; and upon his death his will was found to be the most extraordinary affair ever penned. It appeared that before his sudden reconciliation with, and promise to, Jasper, he had intended bequeathing all his possessions to the son of an old and valued friend. He had even made a will to that effect; and had spoken so as to excite expectations in the minds of the parents of the boy whom he had selected for his heir. Andrew was always very eccentric, and I suppose he found himself in a difficulty. However, in his will he bequeathed the great bulk of his property, including Summerfield, to Violet, on condition that she married the son of his friend. Up to the age of twenty-one she was to enjoy the property as heiress; but if after that age she refused to comply

with the conditions of the will, it was to pass from her at once and for ever, and revert to the rejected gentleman. Now, Sarah, just think of this, and then consider the dreadful state that things are in at present; and tell me if I am not in the most difficult position in which any unhappy guardian was ever placed."

Mrs. Singleheart inhaled a deep breath of astonishment.

"Well, I must say, Dorothy," she said, "that I never heard of any thing so excessively whimsical and awkward out of a novel. And who is the young gentleman so strangely named in the will?"

"His name is Frank Forensic."

"Frank——? Why, is he a barrister, and the son of the celebrated Mr. Justice Forensic?"

Aunt Dorothea nodded her head in a despairing affirmative.

"Oh, Dorothea, my dear friend! this unfortunate, ridiculous affair must be ended at once. Frank Forensic! why he's the nicest, cleverest, kindest, most honest——" Mrs. Singleheart here lost herself in a crowd of rapturous superlatives. "Oh! I only wish one of my girls had such a chance. He is doing splendidly at the bar; and his father is most distinguished and exceedingly wealthy. And have you,—has he,—how does the young man himself feel disposed to look upon the matter?"

"I only saw him once," said Aunt Dorothea huskily; "but I must say that I was extremely pleased with him. He came down here one day before Violet's return from school, on purpose to have an interview with me on the subject. It was an exceedingly awkward arrangement, he thought, both for himself and for Miss de Coverley. 'Why, madam,' he said, laughing, 'it is enough to make her hate me.' He tried to cover the embarrassment which we both felt during the interview by appearing to treat the matter as a joke. 'If Miss de Coverley and I could meet and become acquainted,' he said, 'I daresay we should soon make up our minds as to whether or not Mr. Andrew de Coverley's arrangement should be allowed to hold good. In case the lady decides against me, of course I trust you understand that the will shall at once be set aside; I need hardly say that I could not take advantage of it.' 'Violet is just,' I said; 'and I know she would never endure that, Mr. Forensic.' 'Madam,' he answered, drawing himself up a little, 'I am just too.'"

"And how did the interview end?" asked Mrs. Singleheart.

"It ended by my promising to give him an opportunity of making Violet's acquaintance. Before he went away, he asked me (with a little manly becoming hesitation) whether I was in possession of any likeness of Miss de Coverley, and would be kind enough to

let him see it. I showed him a nice little miniature which was painted when the child was fourteen. She looks very pretty and saucy in it. He was very pleased when he looked at it. 'A very charming little face,' he said; 'a very sweet, sunny, piquant little face. I'm afraid she won't have me, Mrs. de Coverley.' He quite blushed up, and he looked so brave and modest that I felt almost an affection for him at once. He asked me to let him keep the miniature. I hope I was not wrong in yielding; but I was rather agitated, so that I could scarcely deliberate; and besides, I was very much delighted with the young man. It was only a child's likeness after all. He was very grateful. 'I will keep it, madam,' he said, 'till the original demands it back again.'

"Well, my dear Dorothy," said Mrs. Singleheart, "there is only one course for you to pursue. You must send Violet to London."

"Oh!" said Aunt Dorothy, "how I now wish that I had taken her there in April, and brought her out! I had meant to do so; but, finding her so silly, I judged that a year passed quietly in the country might benefit the child both in body and in mind. I had hoped too that she might have met Mr. Forensic here at Summerfield, before mixing with the world. Now, however, since this unlucky affair has arisen, it would be madness—perfect destruction to everything that is desirable—to ask him here."

"Decidedly. But not to send her to London. You must stay behind yourself, and let her go alone. You must think of some gay friends who will take her in. Why, there are her cousins, the Dashaways! They would be delighted to get her, and at their house she would be sure to meet Frank. There, Dorothea, my poor, dear, puzzled soul,—there is my advice. Get her an invitation, and send her off to the Dashaways as fast as you can."

"But, Sarah, what can be done if the silly girl really and seriously likes this dreadful Canterdale, and makes up her mind to hate Mr. Forensic before she sees him?"

"Well, as for the hating, I don't object to that at all,—just to give a little spice to matters at the beginning. It will only be a poetical sort of hating, which will serve to give him a dash of interest, and will be quite different from genuine dislike. And as for the child's having any serious feeling of regard for the other gentleman, why, that would be very miserable indeed. But we must discover all about that, I see. I have a plan. You must conceal your feelings a little, Dorothea, and invite Mr. Canterdale to tea on to-morrow evening. If you do, I will venture to promise to tell you pretty correctly by bed-time what is the true state of the case on this important point."

"I dislike the idea of that very much," said Aunt Dorothy. "Still, if you think—but see! there goes the white pigeon. Under its wing there is a poetic effusion. Violet has seen it already, and has disappeared. She will take the bird in at her window, and go into raptures over the verses. I am not afraid of her writing, even a word, in return, silly as she is; but she will probably tie a flower, or a scrap of ribbon, round the pigeon's neck, and send it off again. I have seen it flying home so decorated. And so things go on, getting worse and worse."

"But, Dorothy, we are going to set them right again. To-night you must despatch two notes; one to the Dashaways, and one to Mr. Augustus Canterdale. And now let us go in, my dear friend, for I very much want my tea."

Mr. Augustus Canterdale was sitting in the twilight at the open window of his own apartment at Brushwood Park. He was reclining upon a comfortable couch, with a handsome rug spread over his extended feet. He was a good-looking young man with curling hay-coloured hair and blue eyes, at present half closed. In the lines of his face you might easily discern that he loved a lazy and luxurious life, and fully intended to lead no other, and yet that he was capable of making sudden and violent exertion when it suited him to do so. At present he held a cigarette in his fingers, and looked down through the green summer trees, and the cool twilight stillness twinkling with little early stars, down to the fair domain of Brushwood Park, that lay with its green lawns all fresh in the dew, and its thickets all softly wrapped in the purple mists of the hour.

"To think of losing this!" he said, with sudden animation. "This! To think of Brushwood going to the hammer like a superannuated chest of drawers or a cracked looking-glass! To think of somebody picking it up a bargain. Thank you. Not if I know it."

A knock came to the door, and a servant brought him a note. He turned it over, and his countenance elongated very considerably when he looked at the superscription. He gave vent to his feelings first by a discomfited whistle, and then—"The old dragon! what is she writing to me for?"

He tossed his cigar out of the window, and broke the seal.

"Mrs. Dorothea de Coverley presents her compliments to Mr. Augustus Canterdale, and requests the pleasure of his company to tea on to-morrow evening at seven o'clock."

"By Jove!" ejaculated Mr. Canterdale, "*By Jove!* how very condescending of the elderly person! So she's coming round, is she? How very nice! And it's all to be plain sailing henceforth? Well,

I don't object. Oh! I'll be there, old lady,—seven o'clock precisely; and if I can only contrive to get this little trinket," he added, tossing a glittering something in his right hand as he spoke,—“if I can only manage to get this slipped upon Miss Violet de Coverley's slender finger before I make my adieux—why, it won't be a bad evening's work.”

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